

MEMORIES  
OF  
MANHATTAN

IN THE  
*SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES*

By  
CHARLES T. HARRIS













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CHARLES TOWNSEND HARRIS



NEW YORK

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## INTRODUCTION

**Y**OU have often asked me to relate the mode of life which embraces manners and customs of the New York of the sixties and seventies, the architectural changes, transportation, amusements, the men and women of note; in short, everything pertaining to that period in the city's history. I have been a very busy man and during my occasional visits could furnish you only the desired information in fragments which I realize were not entirely satisfactory to you. Now that I have more time at my command, I shall write you a series of letters and endeavor to cover all you wish to know; it will be a labor of love with me, as in doing so it will convey to your young and inquiring mind the great changes that have taken place in our native city. The personal pronoun must necessarily figure in this, my narrative.

It is only those who have been familiar with the events and phases of the past who can realize the mighty differences between the New York of 1860 and the New York of today. In your young life you have seen many of those changes and will see many more, but naturally those changes have not made as strong an impression upon your mind as upon mine.

The first episode in my life that has remained a rather harrowing memory was the execution of Hicks the pirate at Bedloe's, now Liberty Island. Hicks shipped upon a sloop that touched at various ports on Long Island Sound. It entered his mind that as master of the sloop he could better himself by getting the trade that his skipper was enjoying, so he murdered all hands on board. Shortly after he fell into the hands



of the U. S. Marshal, was duly tried and sentenced to death. His execution was the last public one held in an eastern state and the occasion drew dozens of crowded steamboats to the scene. I, with a boy companion, put out in a leaky scow on Gowanus Bay, and braving disaster under fluttering paddle wheels saw the man hanged. Later, with my chum I sat on Mount Washington, now in Greenwood Cemetery, and saw the long-heralded Great Eastern sail up the bay. She looked tremendously large and seemed larger when we rowed around her before she tied up at the Hammond Street pier, which was too short for her great length.

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## I.

### OLD BROADWAY

**L**IKE all old New Yorkers, the street most firmly fixed in our minds is good old Broadway; but oh, the changes in the main artery of the city! In our time a man did not almost have to break his back to see the top of a building. Now if you want to see Trinity Church you have to get a search warrant. Six stories was the limit in the early days, as the hand-pumped engines could not throw water any higher to do good. Let us in imagination cross the old South Ferry, amble along State Street and stop for a minute in front of the old round-faced building, the oldest now in the First Ward excepting Fraunce's Tavern, and now a Catholic Mission. On the lamp-post in front I draped myself and saw the Prince of Wales in a British Colonel's uniform, come out of Castle Garden, mount his horse and review the troops turned out in his honor, all except the 69th, all Irishmen, for whose absence Col. Mike Corcoran was hauled over the coals. I fell off the lamp-post onto a man's head. He obligingly boosted me back, and I saw the Prince, many years before he was proclaimed Great Britain's King. What a splendid sight was the Seventh Regiment in cadet grey! And weren't we all proud to know that this crack regiment furnished seven hundred officers to the Federal armies?

Well, we crawl along and find ourselves at Battery Place, with its row of red brick houses given over to the steamship companies. All are gone and the splendid Custom House holds that block. Where Broadway and Whitehall Street branch off is the old Bowling Green. We read all about it in our yellow-

covered history; how the Sons of Freedom on July 10, 1776, pulled down the statue of George the Third and ran it into bullets, and how they knocked off the balls on the panel posts of the iron fence to use as cannon shot. The broken tops of the posts are there today as evidence. What a howl went up when the Board of Aldermen talked of taking down the old fence and putting up a more ornamental one! They found that Americanism in the old town wasn't dead by a long shot, and dropped the subject.

On the west corner from Bowling Green was an old-style brick mansion, painted white, that all New Yorkers knew well. Many times I went inside to see the Revolutionary War pictures. It was the Washington Hotel, once the Kennedy Mansion, built in 1760 by the Earl of Cassilis, and used in the Revolution as headquarters by Sir Henry Clinton. Further up Broadway, opposite Beaver Street, was the granite-fronted Stevens House, headquarters of the First Ward democracy, where John Fox, the Skellys, and other Tammanyites foregathered. Next on the west side loomed Trinity Church and St. Paul's Chapel, unchanged in this changeable age. And then, Barnum's Museum! Many a blissful hour I spent in contemplation of its glories external and internal, and with what grief I saw its destruction that summer day in 1865! A great showman was Barnum, as dear to juvenile hearts as were Dan Rice and Joe Pentland, the circus clowns. After the museum went, the New York Herald and Park Bank put up marble-fronted buildings on its site, to the admiration of all beholders, as they were regarded as palaces, but, in the light of present-day skyscrapers their glory has departed. I well remember the day Abraham Lincoln held a reception at the old Astor House of glorious memory; how a kid of my size and name fell in



*The Kennedy Mansion, later the Washington Hotel, on the west side of Broadway at Battery Place.*



*St. Thomas' Church, Broadway and Houston Street.*





line on the Vesey St. side, passed up the stairs to the big reception room, shook hands with the Great Emancipator, fell in again and had another shake. And with what poignant grief in my boyish heart I saw the old street hung with black from roofs to sidewalks when it was known that the immortal Lincoln was dead. The Astor House is now a memory, in its early days the premier hotel of the States. Its registers contained the signatures of scores upon scores of famous men, foreign and domestic, for which many an autograph collector would be willing to give his right eye.

The City Hall Park, up to the late sixties, was enclosed by a high iron fence with raised stone surbase, much patronized by park loungers and the begging fraternity. More than once my chum and I undressed a cob of hot corn along that fence, when we had the postage stamps or copper tokens to spare for the feast. During the Civil War period, barracks along the Broadway side of the park sheltered recruits and later Confederate prisoners. How we boys wished that we were old enough to go a-soldering! The "Johnnies," wards of Uncle Sam for the time being, derived much revenue from the sale of C.S.A. buttons until it was discovered that some enterprising fakir was turning them out by the gross, and the market fell off. Then there was the fire tower just west of City Hall, with its big bell. How its deep toned and measured strokes made a small boy shake in his boots, as it told the volunteer firemen the district the fire was in. I used to think that bell was about the size of that chap in the Kremlin in Russia. At the southern end of the park, where Mail Street now is, there was a large fountain. My buddy must surely remember that, as when he sat at the tail of a truck in a puddle of sulphuric acid from a broken carboy and had the seat of

his pants burned out, he made a bee-line for that fountain and seated himself gracefully to cool off. When the Tammany ring got well in its stride as a go-getter, the bed and curbing of the fountain were sent up to Andy Garvey's stoneyard, recut, and sold back to the city at a price that would have paid for several such fountains. Just a simple item of the ring's system of robbery.

Well, to resume our journey: Above the park, on the east side, was the marble A. T. Stewart building, forerunner of the modern department store, and across the street from it the granite structure then known as the uptown Delmonico's. The bar in this building was well patronized, and as a peace officer or chucker-out, Jim Cusack, ex-prizefighter, sometimes had to exercise his authority. On the west side, between Duane and Worth Streets, was the shady lawn of the New York Hospital, the building ranging along the Church Street side. Some years after, Pearl Street, the crookedest thoroughfare in the city, was cut through the grounds and a new hospital erected further up town. Continuing our ramble, on the west side of Broadway, the most conspicuous buildings were the St. Nicholas and New York hotels, the LaFarge House, Lafayette Hall, the Chinese Building, Winter Garden Theatre, St. Thomas Church, and the Roosevelt Mansion. On the east stood the Metropolitan Hotel containing Niblo's Theatre, and Grace Church.

All old New Yorkers remember the old business signs and must have noted their many and significant changes. In our young days the street signs breathed of homefolk, old and honored names in American business life. Today they recall a chapter in Exodus and the words of the prophet who proclaimed that "all Israel shall be there."





*Every-day scene on Broadway. The Paid Fire Department going to a fire.*

In the later sixties, it was Broadway's misfortune to be known as the worst paved street in the city, thanks to a commission of which Bill Tweed was a member, who, under the plea of economy, appropriated to themselves the funds that should have been expended in trap blocks, hammered down by Milesian muscle. Let it be recorded that the nation's Capital is not the only city that boasted of a "pork barrel." The heavy traffic of Broadway, often causing a jam that extended from Wall to Canal Street, played hob with the paving. There were deep ruts and hollows filled with mire in which vehicles bogged down. They say the army swore horribly in Flanders and sunny France in the late unpleasantness, but they had nothing on the truck and stage drivers on old Broadway in rainy weather. It was a common trick of a stage driver to help a brother Jehu by "hubbing" him out of a hole. One large depression at St. Paul's south corner was known as Lake Fulton, in which many an unwary pedestrian came to grief. As a relief to foot passengers who were obliged to cross Broadway at Fulton Street, the Loew Bridge was erected. The bridge had a brief existence as people did not care to climb it. One incident connected with it was the riding across it on horseback by Kate Fisher, who was playing Mazeppa at the old Bowery Theatre. The northeast corner of Broadway and Fulton Street was once known as the "most crowded point in the city," but during my late sojourn in the old town, I saw a corner uptown that would beat it out of sight.

When the Broadway Squad was organized, the first body of traffic police in the country, foot passengers had a chance for their lives in crossing the street. The parade of this body of husky men going on duty was one of the city's sights, matched only by the dash down the street by Charley What's-



his-name, with his pair of chestnut steeds going to a fire. Of the splendid Broadway Squad, all old New Yorkers must remember gigantic John Britton and his able mate, Johnny Aikin, who were on guard at the noted crossing.

In 1861, after the call for volunteers, regiment after regiment, from 1,000 to 1,200 strong, passed down Broadway to the Battery, to return fragments of organizations, their battle flags mere shreds on their shattered staffs. No cheering spectators greeted the returned warriors, rather a silent welcome sanctified by tears. Please God, may never again father and son, brother and brother come together in bloody war in this fair land of ours.

My chum and I were inquisitive youngsters; we wanted to see all that was going on, to know the why and wherefore of everything, and above all to see the men and women of local and extended renown. I well remember that peculiar looking man we often met on lower Broadway on his way to the Battery. He was powerfully built, tall, and rather rolling gaited. He wore a slouch hat with the brim turned down all around, a pilot coat, blue shirt open at the neck, dungaree trousers, held by a broad belt, and heavy boots. He looked like a sea-faring man, with his long hair, shaggy whiskers, and bronzed skin. In after life we knew him as Walt Whitman, the poet. Now we will start up the old street again, and keeping to the west side, bring to life again a few of the many notables that favored the Broadway promenade. One of the most conspicuous Broadway frequenters was a portly, ruddy-faced and smiling old gentleman wearing a broadbrimmed beaver hat, a blue brass-buttoned coat, buff vest and trousers, and a gold-headed cane. A perfect picture of an old-time English squire. Doctor Warrington, at your service, son of George the Fourth and a

finer gentleman than his unworthy sire. A prototype of the courtly doctor was another old gentleman habited in the fashion of Revolutionary times, with cocked hat, small clothes, silk stockings, and buckled shoes. His name escapes me, but he was solicitor for a life insurance company and his costume was a form of advertisement. A small fragile old man who daily made his way to a seat in Battery Park, was of international renown. In his bright eyes shone the fires of genius, as he was Frederick Crouch, composer of the immortal songs of Kathleen Mavourneen and Dermot Asthore. He was also noted as the father of Cora Pearl, at that time leader of the Paris demimonde. A short, swarthy man with piercing black eyes, stamping along on a wooden leg, bound for the Staten Island ferry, was General Santa Ana, known to fame as "the butcher of the Alamo." Occasionally we boys beheld with awe a large old gentleman wearing a broad-brimmed beaver hat, clothes of Quaker drab, and a heavy cane. He appeared to us to be about eight feet high, really standing well over six feet and must have weighed in the neighborhood of three hundred pounds. We knew him by our school history pictures as General Winfield Scott, the hero of Lundy's Lane, and then on the Army retired list. Another warrior of different type, dear to the juvenile hearts, was John C. Heenan, antagonist of Tom Sayers, the English champion, in the twenty-four foot ring at Farnsworth. Heenan was anything but a prizefighter in appearance, stylishly and neatly dressed and in manner a big, good natured boy. Another hero of the "squared circle" was Tom Hyer, conqueror of Yankee Sullivan, who in his old age was one of the handsomest men who promenaded Broadway. In the afternoon a number of noted men passed up from the Custom House to Broadway, homeward bound. Among them

were Herman Melville, tall, broad-shouldered, sedate and bronzed, as all seafaring men are. With what delight we read his *Omoo*, *Typee*, and *Moby Dick*. Others were Richard Grant White, father of Stanford White, and an essayist, and Laugh-ton Osborne, tall, misanthropic, a victim of the book reviewers and self-publisher of several tragedies more suited to the closet than the stage. Others of the literati were George P. Morris, editor of the *Home Journal* and author of the poem, "Woodman, Spare That Tree;" Thomas Dunn English, composer of *Ben Bolt*; William Cullen Bryant, famous poet and part proprietor of the *Evening Post*; Genio C. Scott, the Izaak Walton of his time; G. P. R. James, the novelist; Fred S. Cozens, author of the *Sparrow Grass Papers*; William Henry Herbert ("Frank Forrester"), an authority on sports of the field; Col. T. B. Thorpe, author of the *Bee Hunter*, a favorite boys' book; and Col. Tom Picton, a living encyclopedia of New York long prior to war times.

On their way down to the newspaper district, familiar faces were those of Horace Greeley of the *Tribune*; Manton Marble of the *World*; Henry Hudson of the *Herald*; Moses Beach of the *Sun*; John Biglow of the *Evening Post*; Henry J. Raymond and Louis Jennings of the *Times*; Lewis Gaylord Clark, editor of the *Knickerbocker Magazine*; Hugh Hastings of the *Express*; William T. Porter (the "Tall Son of York"), editor of *Porter's Spirit of the Times*, and George Wilkes, editor of the rival sheet, *Wilkes' Spirit of the Times*, a brilliant descriptive writer of battles, whether of the prize ring or between armies. All old-timers will remember the encounter between Wilkes and George H. Butler in front of the New York Hospital. The two were at sword's points, but the

only damage was the smashing of a pair of shiny plug hats before they were separated.

The art world on Broadway was represented by R. Swayne Gifford, William M. Chase, the brothers William and James H. Beard, Alfred Bierstadt, Walter Shirlaw, George Innes, Tom Nast, Tom Worth, J. G. Brown, Harry Fenn, Sol Ettynge, and a host of lesser lights. The stage folk most frequently seen on the Broadway rialto, from Fourteenth Street to Canal, were James W., Jr., and Lester Wallack, John Brougham, Charles Fisher, John Gilbert, George L. Fox, Milnes Levick, Mark and Sol. Smith, Jr., J. K. Mortimer, Ed. Lamb, John B. Studley, "Uncle" John Weaver, J. K. Collier, William Davidge, and the negro minstrels George Christy, Dan and Neil Bryant, Nelse Seymour, Charley White, Dave Reed, and Johnny Booker. A conspicuous female figure, apart from Dr. Mary Walker in male attire, was a stout lady of middle age, dressed in showy garments whose blond curled wig was an outstanding feature. This was Mrs. Myra Clarke Gaines, who haunted the law offices in the Wall St. district, her life work her claims on the General Gaines estate, involving considerable property in the City of New Orleans. Poor lady! If success was not hers, it was not from want of perseverance or never-failing hope.

Now, since we are on Broadway, let us step down to the First Ward again. The Battery was then, as today, the main breathing space below Fourteenth Street. What is now the Aquarium, was in the sixties and seventies the immigrant landing depot, from which daily issued a string of future citizens of the Republic, representing a score of nations. Between us, if we could turn back about ninety percent of those now swarming in, it would be better for the country. Next to the

old Shipnews office was the stronghold of the Battery boatmen. They were splendid oarsmen and superb physical specimens. In fair weather a round-trip to the Horshoe, 36 miles in all, with sea-chests and a couple of able-bodied mariners to deliver in the roadstead, was nothing out of the way, but with a strong wind blowing from the Northward and ice fields in the bays, it was no joke.

The most noted of these hardy wherry-men were John Blue and Tom the Boatman, stalwart, bronzed and courageous as lions. Their carvel built boats were seventeen feet in length, much in shape like warship cutters, fine sea boats, each provided with a leg o' mutton sail which was not often used. Each year the Battery boatmen had a regatta, the long course generally to Robin's Reef and back. Once in a while a four-oared shell-boat crew was made up amongst them and they always gave a good account of themselves. These boatmen were always on call, down the bay, into the Sound or up the river, their charges according to the distance. The Thames wherry-men could only vie with the Battery boatmen as to hardihood and endurance.

Near the foot of Whitehall Street, as you remember, stood the Western Hotel, that in its palmy days was quite select as a place to put up in. Many noted men stopped there at times, myself among the number, but I was not noted. One of the occupants of the store part of the Western was a mulatto barber, calling himself Daniel Webster; in fact, he had a strong facial resemblance to his reputed father. Around the corner, at Pearl and Broad Streets, is Fraunce's Tavern, which all may see today. My chum and I stood in that large room where the great Washington bade farewell to his officers, and our hearts swelled to think of that parting. At 28 Beaver



Street was housed Franklin Hose Company, and more than once we watched Pat Callahan, Matt Beirne, the Skellys and others grab the tow rope and scoot for a fire.

I well remember the scrap on Barclay Street near the old Sixth Avenue street railway tunnel, between Franklin Hose and an engine company. Spanners, trumpets, fists, and paving stones were the weapons, and no one thought of the fire. The next old-time building within the confines of the First Ward was the Post Office on Nassau Street, extending from Cedar to Liberty Streets. This, in Revolutionary times and later, was the Dutch Reformed Church, the British, when in possession of the City, using it as a riding hall. Up to 1875 it was used as a post office and then torn down, when it should have been kept as a landmark. Many a time we boys stopped at "Pop" Stokes' newspaper stand in the lobby to get a copy of One-Eyed Zeke or some other of Beadle's Dime Novels.

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## II.

### THEATRES OF NEW YORK

**W**E, as boys, were great theatre fans, bound to see everything that was new and good, even if we had to sit in the cheaper part of the house, and I propose to take you on a ramble among the houses devoted to the sock and buskin. Regarding changes in times and manners, I know of no greater change than in the character of the plays and the technique of the theatrical profession, as I have kept up theatre going for all I live away from the old town. Our favorite houses of entertainment were Barnum's Museum and the old Bowery Theatre, with an occasional look in at Bob Butler's Varieties at 444 Broadway. Looking at a New York paper of today, one is amazed at the number of theatres. In my day, before I had got fairly dried behind the ears, there were less than a dozen theatres in the city, but then the population of New York was less than a million.

In the "Lecture Room" in the Museum, as Barnum called it, we saw many an entrancing domestic drama, and what a fine company Barnum employed! There were Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Prior, George Jamison, Milnes Levick, Thomas Hada-way, and George Clark, principals in the cast. The plays invariably were wholesome, not a word to offend the deacons who would not be caught in a theatre. Oh, no! but a "lecture room" was different. A week was occasionally given to traveling companies, such as Sanford's Minstrels and the Denier Pantomime Troupe. Tony Denier was a great clown and retired with a good fortune, losing it in unfortunate real estate speculations in Chicago. I remember Tom Higginson's barber

shop on the Museum corner, and the lithograph of The Man who Gave Barnum his Turn. I recall the story. One day Barnum, in a great hurry, entered the barber shop for a shave and found a very hairy, red-headed Irishman ahead of him. Barnum offered to pay for Pat's barbering provided he gave the showman his turn, which was a go. In a few days Higginson presented Barnum with a bill on Pat's account. The Hibernian had gone the whole hog, a shave, hair cut, curl, shampoo, and hair and whiskers dyed a glossy black. "He'd have taken a Turkish bath too," explained Higginson, "if I had the accommodations." It was a joke on Barnum, but he was shrewd enough to turn it into an advertisement. After the Museum burned, Barnum opened in the Chinese Building, but it wasn't to us at all like the old place.

The Bowery Theatre, the old Drury of America! Can an old New Yorker forget it? It still stands, if I am correctly informed, but renamed and is given over to Yiddish plays. Many a night my chum and I sat out the bill, thrilled to the marrow with the exploits of Jack Sheppard, Three Red Men and Mazulm the Night Owl. The dramas were of the blood-and-thunder kind, but in the end virtue always triumphed over vice. There was a change of bill every night, the curtain up at 7:30 and the last curtain about midnight. Holiday nights had extra long bills and when it was ended, the bouncers had to go around with their rattans and wake up the sleeping kids. William Whalley, Joe Winter and Sid and Shirley France were the heavies, G. L. Fox the low comedian, and Fanny Her-ring the leading lady, with John B. Studley an occasional star. How our blood curdled when Winter and Whalley met in a Bowie knife fight, and how we exploded when Fox, as the fat Steward in Sinbad the Sailor, cut up his capers! We were there

the night Joe Winter bade farewell to the stage. When he talked to the boys in a fatherly strain he had a weeping audience and we cried with the rest. The New Bowery Theatre, further up the street, operated on the same lines as the old house, had a brief existence, and was burned in the winter of 1867. One of the old Bowery's favorite plays was Uncle Tom's Cabin, in which Mrs. G. C. Howard was the popular Topsy, a part she played until well past the middle age. Years after, we boys often took in Humpty Dumpty with George L. Fox as the clown and Charley Fox the pantaloon. They were a great pair, none equalling them. The Staats Theatre, across the way from the old Bowery, with an immense auditorium, was devoted to the German drama but as we did not *Spreehen Sie Deutsch*, we did not patronize it. In the late sixties Tony Pastor opened a variety theatre on the Bowery that never lacked patronage. Ancient theatregoers must remember Tony's song, "Down in a Coal Mine," and his "Now, boys, give the chorus," with every tongue and throat responding with a will. It was in this house that Lillian Russell made her first New York appearance, and a more beautiful creature never stepped on a stage. May and Flo Irwin were also Pastor debutantes and May is now living on velvet, as she always had the saving habit.

Now we will slide along Broadway to "The Fours," Bob Butler's Theatre, where only males were admitted. The performances were rather rough at times but there was no profanity or out-of-the-way speeches. As smoking in all parts of the house was permitted, we sometimes had to sit in a fog, which was not good on the eyesight. The stellar entertainers at Bob's were Johnny Thompson, Frank Kerns, Tony Pastor, slim and active, Johnny Wild, Charley Fox, and Millie Gor-

enflo, the dancer. I met a well-informed theatre manager not long ago who informed me that 444 Broadway was an old theatrical site. A theatre was there in 1812, known as the Olympic. Twenty years after it was used as a circus and later became known as Mitchell's Olympic. Butler opened it in 1862, patterning the bill after the style of River's Melodeon in Philadelphia, the first vaudeville house in the North. Next to the Bowery Theatre "The Fours" was the most popular place of entertainment of the common people.

A little further up the street, on the west side, was the Broadway Theatre, managed in turn by J. W. Wallack, John Brougham, and John Jack. Among the stars that appeared in it in its closing days were Ada Isaacs Menken, another stage beauty. One of my dear friends, who shall be nameless, was one of her husbands, and her name was on his lips when he breathed his last. We saw in that theatre Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams in *The Emerald Ring* and Barney sang *Tim Finnegan's Wake*.

Again, on the east side of Broadway were located Henry Woods' Minstrels, with Eph Horn, Frank Brower, George Christy, and Johnny Booker in the company. Later, if I am not mistaken, this house was devoted to the legitimate drama, one of the last productions being *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, with George Jamison as Tom and "Gentleman" George Barrett as St. Clair. In the early seventies Josh Hart leased the theatre and ran it as a vaudeville house. It was in this theatre that Ned Harrigan made his first Metropolitan appearance. He and Sam Rickey, G. A. R. man, did a song and dance and appeared in sketches. Rickey was a positive genius as a character actor, but drink got the best of him and the stage lost a shining light. With what delight we listened to the soft shuf-



fles of Master Barney and Kitty O'Neil in their sand jigs! After Josh quit Harrigan and Tony Hart took the theatre and named it the Comique, sticking to variety for a while and originating the Mulligan Guards. Many nights we sat out the Mulligan plays of New York life from a humorous standpoint. They had a noted company: Harrigan and Hart, Johnny Wild, Billy Gray, John Sparks, Dan Collyer, Mrs. Yeamans, and Annie Mack, funmakers of the first class. As they used to say of the Comique, "Fifth Avenue in the boxes and democracy in the pit," and that was just about right.

On the next block, in Mechanics Hall, were located Bryant's Minstrels, Dan, Neil and Jerry Bryant, proprietors. In a great measure this theatre acquired historical distinction, for in it was first sung that stirring song, Dixie, words and music by Dan Emmett, a member of the company. Another member of the company was Dave Reed, whose song and dance, Sally Come Up, was a great feature. Dave was a superb bone player, the envy of Billy Birch, George Christy, and other end men.

Between Houston and Bleecker Streets, on the east side of Broadway stood the Olympic Theatre, formerly Laura Keene's. In this theatre Augustin Daly began his career as a playwright, with *The Streets of New York* and *Under the Gaslight*. In the first-named play Johnny Mortimer made a decided hit as Badger. Ed Lamb played Dan; Mark Smith was Puffy, the Baker; and Rose Ettynge and Kate Newton had the principal female parts. In the prologue John B. Studley was Captain Fairweather and gave a masterly performance. We used to think Studley was the finest all-round actor on the New York stage, as he was at home in melodrama, tragedy, genteel comedy, and farce. Many a man figuring as a star was not



his equal. In *Under the Gaslight*, Mortimer made another hit as Snorkey, the one-armed messenger, and Charley Parsloe was great as Bermudas, the street gamin.

In the La Farge House building in the west side was the Winter Garden Theatre, where Edwin Booth as Hamlet captured the town. My chum and I could not muster the necessary wherewithal to see the tragedian, but we contented ourselves one day by reading the billboard in the lobby. The play was *Julius Caesar*, with the brothers Edwin, John Wilkes, and Junius Brutus Booth in the cast. We made up for that afterward in the new Booth's Theatre. One bitterly cold night in 1865 the Winter Garden Theatre was destroyed by fire and was not rebuilt.

Retracing the line of march we go back to the Metropolitan Hotel building. In it was Niblo's Theatre that once stood by itself. Under the management of Wm. Wheatley in the early sixties, the famous French pantomimists, the Ravels, performed there and on a later visit introduced the juvenile prodigy, Americus, on the flying trapeze. Another youngster that made a hit with us kids was little All Right, that was with a troupe of Japanese acrobats. But under the management of Jarrett and Palmer things began to hum at Niblo's. The spectacle, the *Black Crook*, created a sensation. Ladies kept away for a time, as the female performers appeared in tights, and that was a terrible thing at that time. However, New York got used to it, having recovered from the shock, and the house was daily filled during a long run. I did not take that in but made up for it when Lydia Thompson and her troupe of British Blondes came along. Lydia's song of *Beautiful Dreamer* went through the country like wildfire. In this company of sprightly beauties were Eliza Wethersby, the first wife of Nat

Goodwin, and Laura Joyce, who married Digby Bell. Both women were honors to their sex and made model wives. In 1872 Buffalo Bill, assisted by Texas Jack Omohundro and Ned Buntline, appeared in a blood and thunder play called *Scouts of the Plains*. Bill and Jack were then splendid looking men.

At 718 Broadway stood Hope Chapel which A. T. Stewart purchased and converted into a theatre. The first lessees were the Worrell sisters, Sophy, Irene and Jenny, who produced extravaganzas and burlesques such as *Ixion*, but the Worrell reign was brief. Lena Edwin was the successor and failed badly after a short trial. There seemed to be a blight on the building, having once been a place of worship, and its last bid for public support was an *Old London Street*.

Well, when we grew older and had better understanding of things, we attended Wallack's Theatre at Thirteenth Street and Broadway, just to see one of those English comedies like *The Rivals* and *She Stoops to Conquer*. What a picture of a fine old-time gentleman John Gilbert presented! Never in American theatrical history was a finer company got together; Wallack, John Gilbert, Charles Fisher, George Holland, John Sefton, Owen Marlowe, Matilda Herron, J. W. Shannon, Louisa Eldridge, Eliza Gilbert, Fanny Morant, and Effie Germon; later Henry Edwards, Henry Montague and Eben Plympton. Never was there a more courtly Sir Peter Teazle than Mr. Gilbert, a greater Camille than Matilda Herron, nor a lovelier Lady Teazle than Rose Cochlan, a later joiner of the company. For a week or so, in the summer months, engagements were filled by various traveling companies. Dan Bryant, when his minstrel hall was "dark," played in white face at Wallack's. We saw him in *Handy Andy* and in *Shamus O'Brien*





*Interior of Augustin Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre,  
at 29 West 28th Street, 1873.*



*Booth's Theatre, 1870.*

and Dan was right good in both characters. Two of the Wallack Company had gentle hobbies. Mr. Fisher was an accomplished violinist, and Mr. Edwards was a collector of butterflies and moths, his collection left to the Metropolitan Museum of Natural History being the most complete of any in existence.

Wallack's was the last theatre on Broadway in the sixties. In the seventies two minstrel companies located on Broadway, one managed by Birch, Wambold and Backus, the other by Kelly and Leon. Theatre building then tended to west of Broadway. On Fourteenth Street, near Sixth Avenue, was Paul Jugnet's French Theatre which opened with operettas by Offenbach, passing through several hands with losses. Edwin Forrest played his last New York engagement in this house, presenting *King Lear* and *Richelieu*, characters in which he was unrivalled. Great as he was, the management lost money on the engagement. Well I have seen Forrest and that old-time ranter, McKean Buchanan, but in the robust parts, such as *Othello*, *The Gladiator*, and *Samson*, the great Italian, Salvini, was head and shoulders above them. However, Salvini was a comparatively late comer. Dan Bryant finally settled on Twenty-Third Street near Sixth Avenue, and in the company was Nelse Seymour, Bob Hart, Little Mac, Jim Unsworth and Eugene. Dave Reed stuck from start to finish and outlived all the company.

On the first Monday in February, 1869, the new Booth's Theatre was inaugurated. My chum and I having reached the frock coat age and beginning to shave, made up our minds to be on hand that night. As I knew John McGonigle, Mr. Booth's business manager, I secured two good seats. The play was *Romeo and Juliet*, Mr. Booth and Miss Mary McVicker in the



title roles. As it was known that the two principals were engaged to be married, there was added interest to the romantic play. It was a beautiful production and splendidly rendered by a superb company. Edwin Adams was the Mercutio, Harry Langdon the Tybalt, Charles Peters the Peter, Henry Norris the Paris, James Anderson the Friar Lawrence, and Madam Ponisi the Nurse. The seasoned theatre-goers were struck with the new way of working the flats. Instead of sliding them from the sides on the stage level, the flats, in one piece, were lowered to the scene dock below through a slot trap. All lifting, lowering, and working the traps were by hydraulic power. Some seasons after, Julius Caesar was presented at Booth's with a star cast, Booth as Caesar, E. L. Davenport as Brutus, Lawrence Barrett as Cassius, and Frank Bangs as Mark Antony. Bangs' speech in the Forum over Caesar's body was magnificent, and what a grand figure of a Roman soldier he was!

The Academy of Music at Fourteenth Street and Irving Place, was an old-timer, devoted to opera, which we did not affect. At Steinway Hall, across the street from the Academy, we heard Patti in concert, and never shall I forget that heavenly voice. We also heard Ole Bull in his violin solos and heard Charles Dickens read from his works, and I guess there are not many New Yorkers left who can say that.

Patti was a very pretty brunette, rather of the Spanish type, and as she sang I could see her throat muscles vibrate like those of a canary bird in song. Her renderings per program were classical selections, received with polite applause, but for the encores she sang old-time ballads, such as *Within a Mile of Edinboro Town*, and brought down the house. Ole Bull was a tall man with long dark hair, very broad in the





*The Reception to the Prince of Wales at the Academy of Music.*



shoulder and his playing was marvelous. Charles Dickens was of medium height, bushy-haired, wearing beard and mustache, and was very high colored. He looked more like a seafaring man than a man of letters. He used a small stand with an open book upon it, to which he never referred, reciting from memory. I read his *Old Curiosity Shop* and never realized the pathos of the death of Little Nell until I heard Dickens read it.

One summer afternoon in the early seventies I attended Steinway Hall to hear the famous Vienna composer, Johann Strauss, in a musical program. He had the services of about eighty members of the New York Philharmonic Society, all thorough musicians, and the audience was largely made up of fashionables who had come in from various summer resorts for the special occasion. Strauss, a small, dark man, with Jewish features, was the leader. I noticed that although each musician had the notes before him, he paid no attention to them but kept his eyes on the animated figure of the leader. It seemed as if an invisible wire stretched from the agile Austrian to each member of the marvelous orchestra, and at each motion of Strauss' violin bow, which he used as a baton, there was a synchronous response from the others. All the Strauss dance compositions were rendered, furnishing a program calculated to linger in the memory of all who had the great pleasure of hearing it.

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### III.

## OLD-TIME RESTAURANTS

**I**T is a good thing I agreed to live my youthful days in New York over again. I knew the old town when it was different from what it is today, and in it passed the happiest part of my life. We old-timers realize this fact more poignantly as we grow older and look back. "Comparisons are odious," wrote Shakespeare, but I think he was wrong, as it is only by comparison that we learn progress and decide whether the world is getting better or worse. I believe on the whole that it is better. The times and the manners must change; that is inevitable.

But I didn't mean to start a lecture. Reading an article in our local paper on the high cost of living, carried my thoughts back to the old eating houses of New York, as they were called. Of course, old New Yorkers remember Fort's restaurant on Fulton Street between Broadway and Nassau Street, how boys with healthy appetites got a cut of roast beef, with mashed potatoes, brown gravy and bread and butter, all for six cents. Also a big boiled apple dumpling with hard and soft sauce for the same money.

When the war broke out prices went up and up, and World War prices were not to be compared with the tariffs of 1861. As for money, Uncle Sam needed all the coin and at first about all we had to go on was wild-cat bank-bills. Cashiers wore out their thumbs pawing over Kemper's (I think it was Kemper's) Bank Note Detector, to see which was good and which was in the discard. Then we had to depend on ferry tickets, postage stamps and copper tokens for the

collateral. My chum and I, as office boys, received the princely stipend of fifty cents per week, and were raised to seventy-five cents when it was found that we could do a half-mile errand in less than an hour and a half. More than once we found our postage stamp pay stuck together and ourselves almost in bankruptcy, with the next payday about twenty miles away. Then came along the postal currency, which looked more like money. In those days which tried men's spiritual souls and shoe soles, we had to cut our mid-day lunches down, if we did not bring them from home. A couple of bolivars or a five-cent chunk of Washington pie somewhat relieved the pangs of a small boy's stomach. Hot dogs were in the far future, but hot corn and baked potatoes were plentiful in season.

After our financial condition was bettered, we lunched at Ferd Blancke's, Trinity Place and Cedar Street, where we could get a big cut of brown bread and a bowl of milk for ten cents. Blancke raised all he sold but the flour and other staples, and could realize a fair profit at his prices. The place was mainly patronized by low-salaried clerks and office boys. Thrifty souls like "Uncle" Russell Sage also frequented Blancke's. One day the originator of puts and calls found so many in the place that there wasn't room to sit on a window sill. Tapping a party seated at one of the long tables, on the shoulder, "Uncle Russ," in a loud tone, announced that an Atlantic steamer had been in collision off the Battery and was sinking. Nuf ced, Mr. Sage had a seat quicker than scat. Having stowed away his bread and milk, "Uncle Russ" emerged from the place, picking his teeth and humming his pleasant tune, as Mark Twain used to observe. As he hit Broadway he noticed people rushing down the street. On inquiry he was in-



formed that an excursion boat had gone down off Governor's Island with all on board. "Uncle Russ" broke into a gallop, halting suddenly when he reached Bowling Green—caught in his own trap.

The Wall Street folk who believed in high living, patronized Delmonico's on William Street, Dorlan's in the Custom House, and Rudolph Staudinger's on Broadway between Pine and Wall Street, operated some years after by Tom Cable. Business men further up got their meals in the Astor House rotunda and at Delmonico's at Chambers Street and Broadway.

The oldest landmark in the public house line in the First Ward was Old Tom's, corner of Thames Street and Trinity Place, torn down a few years ago. This was patterned after the old-time English ale houses. Sanded floor, heavy round oaken tables, stout chairs, barrels laid on their bilges and a general air of solid comfort. There the customer could regale himself with Welch rarebit, pork and mutton pies, mutton chops, roast beef, musty ale, and wines in their variety. Another place much on the same order was Gil Davis' in the basement at Liberty and Nassau Streets. Up Liberty toward Broadway was Sutherland's where John Simmons killed Dur-yea in a quarrel. John Farrish's at Nassau and John Streets, was a chop house on a pretentious scale. Each New Year's Day Farrish hung up a printed statement of the year's sales of chops, steaks, and so forth, making a stupendous exhibit. Those favoring seafood hied themselves to Sid Dorlan's in the Custom House or to the Dorlon place in Fulton Market. Across from the market, on Fulton Street, was Smith's, a favorite resort of old fire department "vamps"\* and sea captains who

\*Not the "vamps" as known today.







*The Dining Room of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, on Madison Square.*



*Oyster Stall and Lunch-room at Fulton Market.*

happened to be in port. The walls of Smith's place were lined with old fire helmet fronts, fire scenes in color, published by Currier and priceless now, trumpets, belts, and other fire paraphernalia. If a man wanted a cheap and wholesome meal he had only to step into one of the booths lining the market and get a plate of baked beans, with ham or corned beef, and a cup of coffee. While the war was on, coffee, the real article, was a scarcity, the substitutions being rye, chicory, toasted bread, and sweet potatoes.

Across town, at Washington Market, Larry Murley was the chief caterer, and no one who has eaten there has forgotten his broiled oysters and pale ale. In the late sixties Smith and McNell opened a restaurant on Greenwich Street near Washington Market, where the best of good living was on tap. Some one told me that the place is still operated, but the original proprietors are probably among the things that were. Other places in the down-town district were Sandy Spencer's in the old Knox Building and John Glass' at Ann Street and Park Row.

Coffee and cake saloons were distributed all over the down-town district. The most noted of these places was Dolan's in the old Potter Building on Park Row. For ten cents the customer could have a plate of baked beans, with ham or corned beef, and bread and butter "on the side." For the same sum a cup of choice coffee with biscuits soaked in butter, the original "sinkers." After the papers had gone to press there was an influx of newspaper men in Dolan's, from night editors and compositors down to the printers' devils. As all men are equal on the Turf or under it, so were all equal at Dolan's. Thompson's, at Lispenard Street and Broadway, was known to all New Yorkers of the sixties; famous for the ice

cream, cream, not milk, and I sampled it more than once. Cobweb Hall in Duane Street, just off Broadway, was famed for its beef steaks broiled over a wood fire and served on thick slices of homemade bread—a dish for a king.

What were known as fancy groceries, furnished food and drink, with drink having the call. Such places were Harry Felter's and Lidgerwood's, both on Broadway. The place I best recall up-town was Brown's Chop House, on Fourth Avenue, opposite the stage door of Wallack's Theatre. Sherry, Rector, and the other high cards in the catering line were in the far beyond. The place most favored by the wealthy class in the sixties and early seventies was the Maison Dore on Fourteenth Street.

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#### IV.

### NEW YORK'S DRINKING PLACES

THE drinking place was a part of the social system of New York of the sixties and seventies, and while I am detailing city life at that period I cannot very well ignore the popular bar rooms. In our gosling age most of the bar rooms were in the back part of groceries. With their abolition, in the time when small beer was all the go and lager was to come later, places were established where liquor, only, was dispensed. I can say one thing as to the bar rooms of over sixty years ago, and that is that they were fewer in proportion to population than they were in the later decades. It's a good thing that they were wiped out. Once men gathered in them for recreation and sociability, but later they became the breeding nests of political deviltry and headquarters of hoodlums.

One of the best known downtown places was Cale Mitchell's at Nassau and Fulton Streets, opposite the old New York Herald building. When we were running errands we often at noon-time saw James Gordon Bennett, the elder, emerge from the Herald office and make a bee-line for Mitchell's, where he was joined by "Laurie Todd," Grant Thorburn, the John Street seedsman, and they had their Scotch together. Another noted saloon in the district was the Pewter Mug at the corner of Park Row (then Chatham Street) and Frankfort Street, opposite Tammany Hall, that was for many years after the home of the New York Sun. In the early fifties, the Pewter Mug was operated by Yankee Sullivan, the prizefighter. You remember the story in connection with the Pewter Mug? In the Know-Nothing furore, Commodore Vanderbilt took his only active

part in politics. There was to be a big Know Nothing procession and the Commodore was to be one of the marshals. Sullivan gave it out that when the Commodore came along he would pull him off his horse and slap his face. The Commodore was told of this, but it did not faze him any. As the procession passed up Park Row and the Commodore arrived in front of the Pewter Mug, Sullivan stepped out and grabbed the Commodore's leg. Quick as a flash, the future railroad magnate was out of the saddle and on top of the pugilist, and then and there Yankee Sullivan got a worse beating than Tom Hyer gave him in the ring.

Up the Bowery was Atlantic Garden, a German resort, where beer and music were the attractions. Mein Herr and his family peacefully enjoyed themselves and no one got drunk or troublesome. On the Bowery east side, near the hay market, was Gotham Cottage, an old-time roadhouse that was a favorite resort; also headquarters of the Gotham baseball club.

Of all the old New York saloons, Florence's on the southwest corner of Houston Street and Broadway, was the best known. It was a favorite gathering place of the sporting fraternity and men-about-town. A large basement, with an oyster stand at the rear and a long bar on the lefthand side. In the Florence resort took place a number of desperate personal encounters, among them the terrific rough and tumble fight between John Morrissey and Tom McCann, in which the last named got the worst of it. Another fight, in my time, was between Larry O'Brien and Ned O'Baldwin, the gigantic Irish prizefighter. O'Brien hated pugilists, and, strange to say, was always ready to fight one. When he and the big Irishman met, O'Baldwin was beaten to a mummy. One night, when my chum and I had been to the Olympic Theatre, we saw an excited







Messrs. Thomas Brothers' "Marble Refectory," newly opened in 1863 at Broadway and Washington Place.

crowd at the Florence corner. It seems that Red Haggerty and William Varley ("Reddy the Blacksmith") had met and after a Homeric battle, Varley was carried, a battered wreck, to his saloon across the way. Florence sold the place and took the Romantic, a road-house, at McComb's Dam bridge, a resort of the amateurs who drove their trotters over Seventh and Fordham Avenues. After Florence's death, the Romantic was operated by John Barry, the nephew of the former proprietor, who kept it until the driveways were abandoned to the automobiles.

Lafayette Hall, at 597 Broadway, built in the late forties, passed out a few years ago. It was in the bar room of this place that Bill Poole was killed by Lew Baker. Poole was a Washington Market man, a friend of Tom McCann and angered by McCann's defeat by Morrissey in the Florence saloon, challenged the victor to a rough and tumble fight. The battle came off on the Hammond Street pier and Morrissey was worsted. The murder of Poole happened not long after. Baker fled to Europe. While there he acquired a good education, attained refinement and on his return under guarantee of non-persecution, became a model citizen.

When Civil War prices were at their height, Mike Martin's saloon on upper Broadway was patronized by the monied class, as it was a dollar a drink, whether for ginger ale or Three Star Hennessy. You may have heard of Martin, a breezy soul, and as a dresser neither Beau Brummel or Beau Hickman had anything on him. He made a mint of money and being very open-handed died poor. Henry Cunningham's place on Broadway near Eighth Street was patronized by the theatrical profession, as Harry himself was once a member of the guild. Further up Broadway, near the junction of Sixth

Avenue, Jerry Thomas was landlord. I used to go in there to see the pictorial display, as it was a favorite gathering place for the artists. The walls at Jerry's were lined with choice pictures in oils and water color, and caricatures and cartoons by Nast, Worth, Ettinge, and Shepherd. In later years The. Stewart opened a place on Warren Street with a horseshoe-shaped bar. Stewart was a connoisseur in the pictorial line, and had a really fine collection of paintings for which he paid thousands of dollars.

Nolan's Woodbine on Sixth Avenue near Thirteenth Street was an old-timer that drew patrons from all over. It was a favorite resort of the fire laddies of the district, and many a Greenwich Village native, like you and me, heard Pet Denison and Billy Sparks make music in the air. When I had reached my majority "and then some," Ed Stokes and Cash Reed, proprietors of the Hoffman House, opened the most gorgeous bar known to the city. This bar, with its art exhibits and general elegance, achieved national reputation. The Hoffman House bar is gone, but its glories are in the recollection of the comparatively young men of today. Before I forget it, I mention John Ireland's Star on Leonard Street, just west of Broadway.

Allied with the saloons of the city were the sporting resorts, of which Harry Hill's place at Crosby and Houston Streets was the chief. Hill's also had national reputation and it was a common thing to see men high up in the business and political world among the visitors. The drinks were dispensed by handsome English bar-maids, who were really fine straight women despite their calling. Round tables were about the hall, at one of which Hill always sat. When the people got noisy, Hill tapped the table with his pencil and his "order

please" brought instant silence. There was a dancing space at one side, where the round dances of the period were indulged in. In the rear was a stage about thirty feet square, where they had wrestling, club-swinging, and sparring matches. Hill was a fine club-swinger and occasionally obliged. The boxers were Barney Aaron, Johnny Riley, Billy Fields, Arthur Chambers, and George Siddons; later Dooney Harris, and George Siler. Siler became one of the sporting editors of the Chicago Tribune and acted as the referee of many important prize fights. He and Dooney also appeared in the Hill scene in Augustin Daly's *Around the Clock* at the Grand Opera House, in the early seventies. Other characters at Hill's were Fatty Langtry, an elephantine boxer, and Charley Lemons, the light weight. Uncle Bill Tovee, an old English pug, was the first master of ceremonies and was succeeded by "Pop" Whittaker, a former circus ringmaster who had lost an arm. Pop was with Hill to the finish. Uncle Bill retired to Flushing, Long Island, where he gave boxing lessons, as he was a past master with the gloves. Uncle Bill was for years accorded a benefit night at Hill's, when the house was sure to be packed. On these nights Uncle Bill relieved Whittaker. I shall never forget the old man as he doffed his ancient white plug hat and announced: "Gentlemen, on me right is Garge Thiler, on me left is Dooney 'Arris." Then when the regulars had performed, Uncle Bill stepped to the front and inquired, "His Dad Blake hin the 'ouse?" Blake was an old rival of Tovee's, but would never come to the scratch. Then Uncle Bill would issue a challenge for a few rounds with the gloves. One benefit night Charley Lemons accepted Uncle Bill's "defy" and gave it out that he would knock the veteran silly. Well, in the second round Uncle Bill let fly with his "auctioneer," putting Lemons through the



ropes onto the piano below, to the immense delight of the spectators.

If a man had to be ejected from Hill's, out he went without fuss, whether he was Governor of the state or a coal heaver. After the place was closed Hill retired to his farm near Flushing, but business mishaps brought him low and he died friendless and in dire poverty.

Just below Hill's on Houston Street, Harry Lazarus, Hebrew pugilist, had a similar place but on a more modest scale. An Apollo in form and feature, Lazarus was murdered by jealous Barney Friery at a time when hangings were few and far between.

Diagonally from Hill's was Homer Lane's resort. Lane was a noted collar and elbow wrestler and that form of athletic sport was a specialty in his place. He and John McMahon were great in the Cornish style of wrestling. On Center Street near Broome, Izzy Lazarus, father of Harry and Johnny, had a resort. Izzy became so fleshy that life was a burden.

West Houston Street had a number of sporting resorts. Chief of them was Bob Smith's House of Commons, a free-and-easy after the English pattern, where the guests sat at a long table, and the entertainment of song and story was volunteered by the sitters. Mock trials by "Justice" Morton and attorneys in bag wigs were also a part of the program, and the professional singers were Johnny Roach and Hen Dusenberry. Down the street on the other side was Wes Allen's place, a genuine dive, conducted by a man who had served time at Sing Sing and was always in trouble with the authorities. Down on Water Street was Kit Burn's rat pit, where no liquor was sold, but was a resort of dog-owners who made rat killing matches.



Passing from sporting resorts we come to sporting publications. In the sixties the daily papers employed no sporting editors and slight attention was paid to sporting matters unless of special importance. The field had been covered by Porter's Spirit of the Times in the past and continued by Wilkes' Spirit, its successor. Wilkes' paper covered horse racing, baseball, aquatics, field sports and even prize fighting. One of the best, if not the best, descriptions of the Heenan-Sayers fight was written by George Wilkes, who also wrote the Flora Temple story for Hiram Woodruff's book on the American trotting horse. In the late seventies Wilkes fell out with John Chamberlain, who started a paper to kill the Spirit but made a bad failure.

The New York Clipper, established by Frank Queen, had the same scope in the sporting line as the Spirit, but included theatrical matter, short stories, and serials. How we used to go for the Clipper for the reports of our baseball games, as every boy played, London Rules, bare paws and no gloves.

Before closing this letter, a word is due to the memory of Joe Elliott, the chief sporting reporter of the New York Herald. "Uncle Joe" was an unusually able descriptive writer and his fine personality gained him scores of friends. How we used to look up to him! One of his greatest admirers was Robert Bonner who named one of his celebrated trotters after him. Nor must I forget Mark ("Topsy") McGuire of the New York Sun.

## HOTELS AND FIREMEN

WHAT a pair of enterprising young chums we were, to be sure, getting acquainted with the saloons and sporting places! Still, there was no damage to our morals. We were only seeing the old life in its serious and amusing lights. There are far worse places nowadays. I have touched on the leading hotels of the city and time was when the places of the early sixties cut quite a figure. There was the old Merchant's on Cortlandt Street, where the farmers and country store keepers checked in. There were no elevators, electric lights or telephones then. If anyone had predicted such utilities, he would have been thought fit to send to Bloomingdale lunatic asylum.

It was all walk up and walk down, gas to light the way, and let me tell you it was a hard lot for the hayseed who had been taking the sun through a tumbler with a few friends to get to his room. It was quite customary for a guest from the country to blow out the gas, tie a sock over the burner, and wake up in the morning in some other place. Conservative landlords stuck to tallow candles and camphene lamps. At the corner of Broadway and Maiden Lane was the Howard House, which made a specialty of classical music at noontime, rendered by an Italian quartette who were genuine artists. A few doors from Broadway, the Belmont Hotel, on the north side of Fulton Street, leased rooms from fifty cents per night to one dollar, and was patronized principally by printers. I suppose such a place nowadays would be called a "flop."

Down Street, corner of Water Street, was the granite





BELMONT HOTEL

TAMMANY HOTEL

UNITED STATES HOTEL

INTERNATIONAL HOTEL

THE METROPOLITAN HOTEL

FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL

*Famous Hotels of New York.*

United States Hotel that had a decidedly salty air, as it was a favorite stopping place for sea captains and market men. Of course, there was a nook in it where the sea rovers could splice the main brace. The Park Hotel at Beekman and Nassau Streets catered to the newspaper men and its adjunct, Green's Restaurant, attracted those who favored good living. On the corner of William and Frankfort Streets stood the old Carleton House, once a first-class hostelry, where Charles Dickens was domiciled on his first visit to this country.

Where the Staats Zeitung building is now stood Sweeney's Hotel, with a well-ordered restaurant and was largely patronized by the politicians of the neighborhood. The Brower House at Broadway and Houston Street was run by Tim Coe of Falstaffian proportions, and was a resort of the sporting element. All old New Yorkers will remember Big Tim with the ruddy countenance and the diamond breast pin that was a veritable headlight. The Spingler, Sturdevant, Everett, and Morton houses on Union Square were patronized by the monied class, but were not as exclusive as the Brevoort House at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Clinton Place. The Brevoort rates were prohibitive to the average hotel guest. It was generally the stopping place of distinguished foreigners and citizens of wealth. Old-fashioned, richly furnished, and an irreproachable cuisine were the distinguishing features of the Brevoort. The Fifth Avenue Hotel occupying the site of Corporal Thompson's road-house and Franconi's Circus, stood for many years, the furthest from the Battery of any first-class house in the city. All are now memories.

Having "done" the hotels, we will take up the old volunteer fire department. Every youngster of the sixties was a fire engine fan. Each had his favorite and the foreman of a com-



pany was, in his eyes, an outstanding hero. The fire department began in the early part of the last century as a bucket brigade. Each householder was required to have ready for use a stout leathern bucket, inscribed with the name and address of the owner. Once at a fire, a line was formed and the filled buckets passed from hand to hand and the water was thrown on the burning building. After a while the "gooseneck" hand-pumping engine was introduced. The buckets were still used in filling the tanks of these engines and that kept the bucket passers hustling. Then when fire plugs were installed water was supplied from the hydrants and the buckets passed out. As the city grew, so grew the fire department and by 1860 there were 51 engine, 55 hose, and 18 hook and ladder companies. There were eight fire districts, numerically indicated by alarm bells, posted at 13 points. Naturally there was rivalry between the fire companies. The main object was to be the first to reach a fire plug. The receiving engine pumped the water into the next in line if a fire was distant, and the trick was to "wash" a rival engine. This meant to fill the tank of the following engine faster than its crew could pump it out. Of course, fights were the fruit of rivalry, and partizanship led to the formation of such gangs as the Dead Rabbits and Bowery Boys. From this condition arose a type of citizen that was popularly portrayed in the play of *A Glance at New York*, Frank Chanfrau originating the character of Mose, and much loved Mary Taylor ("Our Mary") the role of Eliza. In the time of Mose, "Corneil" Anderson was the fire chief, succeeded by Harry Howard, an heroic figure. We saw Harry many times hobbling from Broadway to the City Hall, a paralytic stroke forcing his retirement.

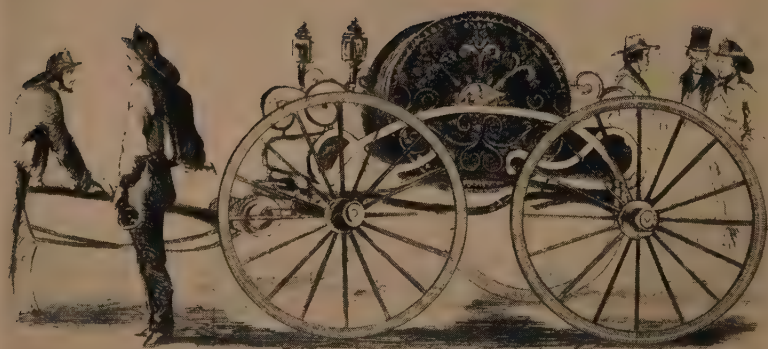
John Decker was the last volunteer fire chief, his office







*New York Engine Niagara No. 4, known as The Philadelphia Style. 1860.*



*"The Seventh Ward Beauty." Ocean Hose Company Number 36, in 1860.*

expiring when the paid department was installed in 1865. The annual parade of the Volunteer department was a function that all the city turned out to see. The fire uniform was a red shirt, black trousers, girthed by a patent leather belt, and a black helmet such as the men wear today. The machines decked with flowers and bunting, the metal work shining, made a beautiful appearance. We were not so young as not to know that rank in the volunteer fire department had political value. Bill Tweed was once foreman of Excelsior Engine on Henry Street, abandoning the decent trade of chairmaker to take up politics that finally landed him in prison. David Broderick, U. S. Senator from California, killed in a duel by Judge Terry, was at one time foreman of Howard Engine that housed in Christopher Street near Hudson. There is a story in connection with him that is not mentioned in his biographies. Broderick caught the fancy of Townsend Harris, then President of the Board of Education. Mr. Harris offered to teach Broderick to read and write, which the future senator accepted. Having acquired the rudiments, Broderick became a fairly well self-educated man.

Certain of the fire companies became great favorites with the public. One of the best known was Black Joke No. 33, Pete Masterson, foreman. This company had an auxiliary end-brake engine, which was generally manned by runners. Lady Washington engine, located on Elm Street, near Franklin, Henry Jones, foreman, was the second of the name in 1860, and a hard going gang ran it, as they were all Sixth Warders. This engine had more than local reputation, because of its mention in the play *The Streets of New York*. Mark Smith, as Puffy the Baker, was made to say: "My name is Jonas Puffy. Yonder's my baker shop, and my boy Dan runs

with Lady Washington Number Forty," and didn't that bring down the house!

Peterson Engine Number Thirty-one, Frank Makedy, foreman, housed in Clinton Street near Canal, was commandeered by the Government during the Civil War and sent to Fortress Monroe, a second-class engine taking its place. Live Oak Engine Number Forty-four, Jim Flynn, foreman, housed on East Houston Street, had a supplementary second-class machine, and this company was the only one in the city owning its apparatus. M. T. Brennan Hose Number Sixty, Martin Reese, foreman, laid at 12 Elm Street. Many of its members, including Reese, joined the Fire Zouaves and rendered good service in the Army of the Potomac. After the war, Reese became janitor of the City Hall. Exempt Engine, located in the Center Street corner of the City Hall Park, was not obliged to attend fires, as its members had served their time, but it was rarely her old "vamps" failed to respond to a call. Zophar Mills was Exempt's foreman, and among other members were Phil. W. Engs, David Theall, George W. Wheeler, F. Hagadorn, and Joseph M. Price, merchants and bankers. Not all the companies were "tough citizens," as in the resident districts the better class of young men were members.

With the passing of the Volunteer fire department, there departed one of the most picturesque features of New York's civic life. There was a great deal of the rough element connected with it, but they were as daring and capable as the men of today who serve as a paid force. The old service was purely voluntary. The old fireman paid his company's dues and his only recompense was exemption from jury duty.

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## VI.

### “THE BLOODY SIXTH”

I AM touching on rather a lurid subject in this letter, and the only excuse for it is that the Sixth Ward was the worst spot in New York in the sixties and seventies. It is somewhat better today, still there is room for improvement. I doubt if any ward or section of a city had a greater proportion of the vicious element or a greater mixture of the nations of the earth, as about every language was spoken there. The “undesirables” seemed to gravitate to that section bounded by Park Row and Chatham Street on the south, Walker and Canal Streets on the north, the Bowery on the east, and Broadway on the west. Well did it earn the title of “The Bloody Sixth,” as a murder was almost of daily occurrence, to say nothing of vice in general. It was a prototype of the *Cour des Miracles* of ancient Paris, where life was uncertain after dark and the police had to patrol the streets in couples. The criminals prominent in police annals were numbered by the hundreds, still it was so difficult to secure evidence of capital crimes committed that convictions and executions were few and far between; in fact, this condition was so notorious that the murderer, Jack Reynolds, originated the saying, “Hanging in New York is played out.” Reynolds, not having a “pull” was brought to the scaffold and his death noted an exception to the rule. Another exception was that of the gang leader and murderer, Danny Deever, whose execution was memorialized by Rudyard Kipling in the ballad: “We’re Hanging Danny Deever in the Morning.”

Before the Chinese invasion of the Sixth Ward with their



tongs and high binders, an oriental found refuge in its pur-  
lieus and gained distinction as an arch criminal. This was  
Quimbo Appo, supposed to be a Chinese but really a Malay,  
who, after a long career in crime, was finally turned over to  
the hangman. Another denizen of the ward and its boundaries  
was "Marm" Mandelbaum, a receiver of stolen goods, or in  
police parlance a "fence." The Whyoo Gang in habits and  
practices was similar to the Apache organizations that have  
for years given the Parisian police no end of trouble.

As a melting pot, the mingling of alien blood intensified  
hereditary criminal tendencies, and it is not to be wondered at  
that the worst passions of humanity were ever manifest.

The better class of citizens of the "Bloody Sixth" resided  
on the western edge of the Ward. Among them were Jimmy  
Hayes, one time member of the Common Council, Morgan  
Jones, an alderman, Judge Joseph Dowling of the Toombs Po-  
lice Court, and Fayette ("Fatty") Walsh, saloon keeper and  
at one time warden of Toombs Prison. Judge Dowling, an ex-  
policeman, was credited with a wonderful memory for names,  
faces, and facts in the history of culprits brought into his  
court, but the real mental keeper of criminal records was his  
clerk, a hunchback, who prompted the judge when a prisoner  
was placed on the stand.

Fayette Walsh was the father of the late Blanche Walsh,  
who became a theatrical star. Born in lowly surroundings and  
receiving a common school education, this remarkable young  
woman rose above what appeared to be a sordid destiny and  
placed herself well up in the social scale.

The Toombs Prison, originally a gloomy structure and not  
at all attractive in its present aspect, had over the "Bridge of  
Sighs" the inscription "Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter







*The Five Points, in 1869.*

Here," but those who had political backing clung to hope and came off scot free.

Across from the Toombs, on Center Street, was the office of Howe and Hummell, the senior member of the firm a burly Englishman, the other a small, dapper individual of the Hebrew persuasion, both noted criminal lawyers. There was no trick known to the legal profession that was without the ken of the two. They were great on technical flaws, and their genius, if it could be so-called, saved many a criminal from limbo. Finally Hummell got in the toils of the law which led to his exile in England where he died comparatively poor.

Old Chatham Street, which began at Frankfort Street and ended at the Bowery, was lined on either side by frame and brick buildings that were erected in the early part of the last century and before, and were devoted to various lines of business, conducted in the main by Israelites. Dealers in new and second-hand clothing were in the majority and each employed what was called a "puller-in." The function of these individuals was to grab a wandering countryman or any other party who appeared to have speculation in his eye, run him into the shop and get a suit of clothes on him before he could gather himself. "It fits like de paper on de wall," he was assured. Occasionally one of these concerns caught a husky Tartar who turned the place inside out.

At the corner of Chatham and Mott Streets stood the Red House, a colonial style frame building that kept a line of goods suited for the farming element, and as the proprietor gave his customers full worth of their money, the place was liberally patronized.

Where is now pretty little Five Points Park, was, in the sixties, the center of the most evil portion of the city. The

Points and Mulberry Bend have surrendered to comparative respectability. The most notable buildings at the section were those of the Five Points Mission and the Children's Aid Society. The aid society had its beginning in a loft on Fulton Street just east of Nassau Street. Christian C. Tracy, a carpenter like the Master he followed, started taking care of the homeless little fellows who sold newspapers and blacked boots. The loft was hired at his own expense, the rude furnishings his own handiwork. There he nightly lodged his street waifs, charging but a few pennies, but not getting enough to pay expenses, he supplying the deficiencies. Eventually a few monied men came to Mr. Tracy's assistance and the building at the Points was used. After removal to old Clinton Hall at Astor Place, the Children's Aid Society came into being. It was Mr. Tracy's plan when the institution gained strength to find homes for the orphans that came under his care. Hundreds of girls and boys were taken to the Middle West and placed where they would have a chance to grow up into useful men and women. There were few failures among these waifs of New York's streets. More than one Governor of a western state dated his rise in the world from his taking up by the Children's Aid Society, and scores of others attained distinction as statesmen and business men. In occasional reference to the Children's Aid Society, Christian Tracy's name is not mentioned; nevertheless he was the father of the institution and earned a white page in the book of the Recording Angel as a humanitarian of humanitarians.

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## VII.

### GREENWICH VILLAGE

**A**S the good of a city must be included with the bad, I shift from the torrid Sixth Ward to what was once the placid Greenwich Village, officially known as the Ninth Ward. I was born in the erstwhile village which in its earliest days was separated from the main city by Lispenard Meadows. People in the early part of the last century visiting Greenwich literally went into the country, as the village was truly a rural settlement. Aside from a few farmhouses, the settlement was much like any crossroads hamlet, until the cholera epidemic in the first quarter of the century drove people out of the main town. Then Greenwich Village got its first start and grew rapidly. Two of the most noted houses were the Greenwich and Richmond Hill mansions. The Greenwich mansion was built by the British admiral, Sir Peter Warren, long prior to the Revolution and stood on the corner of what is now West Fourth and Perry Streets until 1865. From this mansion the village took its name. I was born on the next Fourth Street block, opposite the old Spencer place. Richmond Hill, mainly distinguished as once the home of Aaron Burr, was on elevated ground and near by coursed Minetta Water, a small stream that flowed into the Hudson. The Richmond Hill mansion was in after years converted into a theatre and was torn down before my time.

Among the landmarks of the village that stood up until a few years ago was Schultz's grocery on the corner of Christopher and Washington Streets. It was originally a farmhouse with hipped roof and dormer windows in the Dutch style of



architecture. The old-fashioned interior, the quaint arrangement of the goods and the general old-time atmosphere of the place and proprietor made it very popular. The Sickles mansion on Abingdon Square, where General Dan Sickles was born and lived for many years, was another old land-mark. The Spencer place on West Fourth Street, near West Tenth, formerly Hammond Street, was a white mansion, with a large yard, a fountain, and fine shade trees, and was one of the show residences of the village. A block away on Christopher Street, was Tom Canary's livery stable, which did an extensive Sunday trade, furnishing single and double rigs for excursions to High Bridge and other resorts northward.

On the east side of Hudson Street, between Clarkson and Le Roy Streets, was St. John's burying ground, owned by the Trinity Church Corporation and since transformed into a park. At the foot of Christopher Street and extending northward, oyster schooners and sloops berthed to unload, and further up was the rendezvous of the Conover and Gulick boat clubs, whose barges were used by excursionists to Striker's Bay, Fort Lee, and other points on the river. On Washington Street, near West Tenth Street, stood a brewery, occupying the site of the old States Prison. Before the prison was built there was a battery there, used in the Revolution.

On Bleecker Street near Hammond stood the Methodist Church, dubbed by the irreverent The Eel Pot, by reason of the large attendance during revivals and love feasts. One of the most popular meat shops in the Village was Phil Link's, corner of Hudson and Barrow Streets. After Link's death the widow and sons carried on the business and rolled up a large fortune. Morton Street from Bleecker to Hudson, was lined on both sides with brown stone residences, where the wealthier







*Wm. H. Vanderbilt driving "Small Hopes" and "Lady Mac" on the Fleetwood Track.*



*The Demolition of St. John's Park on Hudson Street, Greenwich Village.*

residents lived, and I am told that some of their descendants still live there. About every street in the Village was a resident street, those doing business generally living above their shops.

The street life of Greenwich Village in the sixties and seventies was different from that of any other part of the city, having more of the rural atmosphere. Vendors with tin ovens sold hot corn in the summer and baked potatoes with butter and seasoning in the winter. During the spring and early summer women bore trays of wild strawberries on their heads, furnishing the fruit in small splint baskets. Chimney sweeps patrolled the streets soliciting jobs with their musical cries, and fish peddlers made "the welkin ring" with blasts from their tin horns. Pass down Morton, Barrow, Le Roy, and Grove Streets or Greenwich Avenue today and observe the homelike houses that are left. There was no "jerry" building in their time; the great fault was that they lacked bath rooms, a wash tub on Saturday night furnishing the means of the weekly ablution. The frames and inside finish of the houses were of honest timber; the method of construction was substantial and artistic and meant to be lasting.

No section of New York City has undergone so few radical architectural changes as Greenwich Village. The greatest change is in the character of its inhabitants. During the period of which I write there was no Bohemianism, no tea rooms, no night clubs, or speakeasies, and very little of the foreign element.

Visitors to New York "doing" the city do not consider the job is done until they have visited Greenwich Village. It is about the first thing an outsider thinks of, as the fame of this section of the city is widespread. It had been long known as the American ward of New York, American denizens, Amer-

ican in manner and customs, although of late years its social phases have materially changed.

Washington Square, while not in Greenwich Village was, and is, in close neighborhood to it. The Square passed through different phases, first as a negro burying ground, next as a public execution place, then as a parade ground of the local militia. On the eastern side was the University of New York, a castellated building, with preparatory and collegiate departments, schools of art, law, chemistry and medicine, and civil engineering. Among the faculty were Professors John W. Henry and John C. Draper, Dr. Valentine Mott, and Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the electric telegraph. At Number 10 Washington Square lived Commodore Vanderbilt, the entire row on the north side being the residence of wealthy owners and the same of the MacDougal Street side, but the Fourth Street side was given up to less pretentious buildings.

The park itself was put in much its present form during the heyday of the Tweed Ring. The commission that had this work in charge was by no means niggardly in providing it with lamp posts, there being several hundreds, which cost the taxpayers about \$100 each. Occupying a niche in the park was the Church of the Strangers, Doctor Deems, pastor. At the start the good doctor found it hard sledding, as the attendances were meagre and the revenues were far overbalanced by the expenses. Commodore Vanderbilt was a very democratic individual and had his own way of doing things. He was tall, broad-shouldered, all bone and muscle, with the quick step of a man half his years. Hair silvery gray with side whiskers, the face of a warrior and a deep commanding voice. He generally dressed in gray, wearing an old-styled winged collar with snowy white cravat, and a beaver hat; the kind of man

people looked after as he passed along the streets or rolled up Fifth Avenue behind his pair of fast trotters, Flatbush Maid and Mountain Boy.

What I started to mention was the connection between Commodore Vanderbilt and Doctor Deems. One Sunday morning shortly after the church was built, the Commodore took his usual morning walk around the block. He was bareheaded, wore a dressing gown, and his feet were covered by carpet slippers. Coming to the church he met Doctor Deems at the door and accepted the Doctor's invitation to hear him preach. Edified by the sermon, the Commodore stayed after service and in a talk with the Doctor learned the status of his enterprise. The sequel was the clearing of all the church debts by the railroad magnate and a fund that placed the pastor and church in substantial financial condition.



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## VIII.

### WALL STREET IN THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES

NOW, my boy, I will give you an idea of old Wall Street, that from the early part of the past century has been the financial center of the republic. It is rather strange and true that Wall Street has a practically unwritten history. The leaders of high finance since the sixties have been many, from Jacob Little, the first plunger of note, barring John Tobin, to the Belmonts, Morgans, Keenes, *et al.* The Civil War brought Wall Street into greater prominence than it ever enjoyed before. Speculation ran high in the early sixties, and when gold and silver were at far advanced premiums, postal currency and copper tokens being the medium of exchange, small piles of hard money exhibited in the windows of brokers' offices attracted sightseers like flies around a sugar barrel.

Always a teeming district of the city, there have been monetary disturbances in the historic street that have shaken the nation. Black Friday, in the seventh decade of the century was the wildest of those agitations. Merchants needed gold to release their goods in bond that were to be delivered at certain prices based on the then gold rates. Fisk and Gould secured a corner in gold with the intention of forcing the premium up, virtually holding up the merchants to great loss or possible ruin.

That fateful morning I was instructed by my employer to stand on the Treasury steps while the Gold Board was open and send a messenger back with the quotations. Broad Street





*"Black Friday," September 27th, 1869. Scene on Broad and Wall Streets during the break in stocks and the "deadlock" in gold.*

was thronged by some thousands of men anxiously awaiting the beginning of the battle. It started with a rush, and within an hour staid business men, coatless, collarless, and some hatless, raged in the street, as if the inmates of a dozen lunatic asylums had been turned loose. Up the price of gold went steadily amid shouts, screams, and the wringing of hands.

I stood alongside the pedestal on which the statue of Washington now stands and heard a stentorian shout from a large man just above me. He shouted again and again until he had the attention of the people. Raising his hand he cried: "Fellow citizens, God reigns and the Government at Washington still lives! I am instructed to inform you that the Secretary of the Treasury has placed ten millions in gold upon the market!" That broke the tension and the price of gold began to fall. The speaker on the pedestal was James A. Garfield, later President of the United States and a victim of the murderous assault of Guiteau.

Then arose the cry: "Hang Fisk and Gould!" as the crowd broke for Exchange Place. The two conspirators had been warned, and jumping into a hack bade the driver reach the Chambers Street ferry at all hazards. Fortunately for them they reached Jersey City in safety, taking refuge in Taylor's Hotel, where they were guarded by Tommy Lynch and his gang. "Uncle" Daniel Drew, former cattle dealer, steamboat and railroad magnate, also "speculator," as he termed it, was mixed up in the Black Friday affair, to be cleaned out in the end by the then controllers of the Erie Railroad.

The big speculators and plungers of the sixties and early seventies were John Tobin, Al Speyer, Jay Cooke, "Deacon" White, Henry N. Smith, and A. B. Stockwell. "Hank" Smith and Jay Gould became deadly enemies through stock specula-

tions, and Gould declared he would live to see Smith driving a dray, finally succeeding in running him out of Wall Street. Smith retired to his Fashion Stud near Trenton, N. J., where he had a fine collection of trotters, including the stallions General Knox and Jay Gould, and the famous race mares Goldsmith Maid and Lady Thorn. He took an occasional flyer on a modest scale in some stock and did not die in poverty. I got to know Mr. Smith very well and found him to be very much of a man. In fact, he allowed me to enter Goldsmith Maid in the first National Horse Show in Madison Square Garden, a concession he had refused others.

Stockwell, like the majority of his class, came to the end of his string. He took his ill fortune philosophically and was wont to say: "When I was on top of the heap I was 'Commodore' Stockwell. When I was a heavy loser I was 'Mister' Stockwell. When I was dead broke and a sure lame duck I was 'that old red-headed cuss Stockwell.'" The way of the world, sonny, the way of the world.

Later the big guns of Wall Street were Rufus Hatch, Henry Keep, William M. Travers, Lawrence Jerome, A. W. Dimock, Charles Woerishoffer, and Charles Osborn. Russell Sage, originator of puts and calls, made the most of his money in commissions from small speculators, and as to loans, there was never a time Uncle Russell could not furnish the where-withal on the best of security.

The open board of brokers, instituted when the country was engaged in internal strife, first met in a building on William Street near Wall. This place was dubbed "The Coal Hole," but the noise being annoying to the officials of the Custom House across the way, the board took up new quar-







Scene at the Corner of Wall and William Streets. The National City Bank now stands on the site of  
The Merchants' Exchange

ters on Broad Street, opposite the Stock Exchange. Membership in the Stock Exchange then cost something like \$10,000, but let a man try to get in now at that figure!

Among the leading bankers in the Wall Street district were Fisk and Hatch, Jay Cooke & Co., Brown Bros., Cisco & Co., Halgarten & Co., Sistare & Co., and Vermilyea & Co. Most of the brokers' offices were on Exchange Place, cubby holes, hardly large enough to get a desk and chair in, but transactions involving millions of dollars were carried out in them.

Naturally Wall Street became a favorite cruising ground of confidence men and petty thieves. To protect the street from this gentry, a police force was formed under the command of Captain Sampson and the dead line placed at Fulton Street. All well known criminals caught south of the line were either arrested or warned not to go further down. Further assistance was furnished by the city, and Broadway was regularly patrolled by Detectives Dusenbury, McDougall, Farley, Kelso, Golden, and others. Phil Farley was then reckoned to be the keenest of thief catchers, the Sherlock Holmes of his time. Kelso in after years became Chief of Police.

After the close of the Civil War a host of street merchants appeared in the Wall Street District, foremost of whom was Henry Smith, "The Razor Strop Man," who entertained the crowds attracted to his stand by speeches on current topics. Smith was a natural orator, so attractive that crowds gathered by him became so unwieldly that he was tabooed from Wall Street. He took up his stand at Pine and Nassau Streets where he did business for some years. Another prominent character was a Frenchman who had served in Napoleon's Old Guard and had the documents to prove it. He also wore

the Cross of the Legion of Honor, conferred on him before Waterloo. This man had a superb bass voice and at noontimes entertained the people with the Marseillaise and other patriotic songs of his country.

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## IX.

### THE PUGILISTS

**W**ELL, sonny, from Wall Street to pugilism is a rather radical departure, but as you at one time asked me what was the difference between the old-time ring warriors and those of today, I will try to elucidate. Prize fighting in this country was a so-called sport borrowed from our English cousins. The exploits of Figg and Cribb on the other side of the water gave birth to fistic aspirants on this side. During our Revolution a negro named Bill Richmond lived on Staten Island and having "trimmed" about all his opponents, attracted the attention of a British Army officer, who took him to England after peace was declared. Richmond was fairly successful as a ring fighter in the realm of George III, and his fame extending to the States, another negro fighter, named Tom Molineaux, born at Georgetown, now in the District of Columbia, went to England to try his luck, which was variable, drink and pulmonary consumption ending his career.

The first ring battle of national importance in this country was between Tom Hyer and Yankee Sullivan, right name Frank Ambrose, an English pugilist. Two men of more opposite characteristics never got together in a prize ring. Sullivan was bullet-headed, compact, and vicious in aspect. Hyer was slim-waisted, beautifully modeled and had the features of a Roman senator. The outcome was the terrible beating of the English champion. Sullivan, after disposing of The Pewter Mug in this city, went to San Francisco and was jailed by the Vigilance Committee, who were doing some much needed hanging. Sullivan, fearing the same fate, committed suicide in his cell.



After Hyer and "Country" McClusky quit the ring, John Morrissey was the idol of the fight fans. Morrissey was of the John L. Sullivan type, a fighter, not a fancy boxer, and was invincible. In after life he served his district in New York as a Congressman with honor.

John C. Heenan, tall, raw-boned, and handsome, a former ironmolder of Troy, had fought some memorable battles in California, earning the title of The Benecia Boy. He was matched with Tom Sayers, the English Champion, the affair creating as much widespread interest in this country as the big ring battles of today. The fight came off in 1857 at Farnsworth, England, and at the ringside gathered men of distinction from the two countries, but the rough element saw to it that the American did not receive fair play. Sayers was outfought and fearfully beaten, being knocked down twenty-one times, striking the ground hard enough to disable an ordinary man. The referee, however, declared the battle a draw, robbing Heenan of the honors. I have heard Dan Bryant, who was present at the fight, say that every time Sayers was felled the blow sounded like a pistol shot. On his return to America, Heenan became a professional gambler and died in this city from consumption.

Joe Coburn was the next aspirant for the heavyweight championship, defeating a few second raters. Matched with Jem Mace, English champion, the two men were several hours in the ring without striking a blow. This fiasco ended Coburn's career as a ring fighter. He also died of consumption, the seeds of which were sown during a long term in States prison.

Other pugilists of the late sixties were Dick Hollywood and Johnny Keating, featherweights, Mike Donovan, middleweight, the lightweights, Barney Aaron, "Dooney" Harris,



*Prize Fight between Morrissey and the Benecia Boy at Long Point.*



"Rocky" Moore, Billy Edwards and Sam Collyer. Mike Donovan was for many years a teacher of boxing and many an old New Yorker is indebted to his knowledge of "the manly art" to that good mentor.

Before the Queensbury rules came into effect, men fought with bare hands, and the battle covered many more rounds than they do in these days when gloves are worn, and the element of brutality was more manifest. In those days men fought for purses that would not attract third-rate present-day pugilists. The Heenan-Sayers battle was for \$10,000 a side, then considered the limit prize for a ring contest, and the only hope a fighter had for making a living on retirement was to open a public house where his reputation would act as a drawing card.

One of the city's visitors in the early sixties was Jem Ward, ex-champion of England, a fine looking middle-aged man. His American admirers arranged a benefit for him, the event taking place at the old Bowery Theatre on which occasion he sparred with John C. Heenan. Jem Ward's subsequent career was radically different from that of a pugilist, as he became an artist and many of his pictures were exhibited at the Royal Academy in London. His was not the sole instance of a pugilist adopting a more refined pursuit in life, as Tom King, another ex-champion, became a grower of roses and took many prizes at the English flower shows.

## THE OLD POLICE OF NEW YORK

THE police force of a city is as much liable to change as any other organization, and the force in New York has gone through the process. I never had the ill fortune to get into the hands of the police, nor have I ever had intimate relations with them, still, like any other citizen I knew the workings of the New York force and much of its personnel. My childhood recollection of the New York police was when there was a conflict between the old body under Chief George W. Matsell and the newly created Metropolitan Police when Fernando Wood was Mayor. So bitter was the feeling between the two bodies that the guardians of the peace became themselves peace breakers even to the extent of murders. Eventually the Metropolitan force won out.

In 1860 John A. Kennedy was superintendent of police with headquarters at 300 Mulberry Street and had less than 2,000 men under his command to protect a population of 800,000. He was a very capable official and was ably supported by his subordinates. John S. ("Jack") Young was chief of detectives, with Farley, Golden, McDougall, Elder and Kelso among his best assistants. They used to tell a story on Jack Young but I cannot vouch for the truth of it. It seems that a country sheriff came to New York to look after a man and called on Young for advice. The sheriff was not familiar with the city or city ways and was cautioned by Young to keep his eyes open. "First thing you know," said Young, "thieves will have your pocket-book, breast pin, and watch," touching each article lightly as he spoke. "No fear of that,"







*A police raid on river thieves returning with stolen cotton. This shows the police uniform of the time.*

said the bucolic sheriff. "Ketch a weazel asleep!" and out he went. Inside of ten minutes the sheriff tore into Young's office, all in a flutter.

"I've been robbed!" he hollered.

"Well, what did I tell you?" asked Young, opening a drawer in his desk. "Here's your watch, here's your pocket-book, and here's your breast pin. You darned fool! I took them while I was talking to you."

George W. Matsell, chief of the old police force, published a book on thieves' slang that collectors prize highly. He also founded the Police Gazette, with those horrible jack-knife woodcuts that old New Yorkers must remember. Sergeant Brush of the Sixteenth Precinct, lived in Greenwich Village and used to tell that when a boy he often saw Thomas Paine in his Grove Street boarding house some time before the author of *The Age of Reason* died.

Of the 1860 captains of precincts and sergeants, John Jordan, George W. Walling, and James J. Kelso became superintendents. Frank Speight, captain of the 29th precinct, was a trotting horse fancier and his was a familiar face at the old Fleetwood Driving Park when the races were on. The Speight Mare, by Seely's American Star, was a noted dam of race horses and Captain Speight was probably the only policeman of note who was recorded in the Trotting Register as a breeder and owner. Other popular captains of the sixties were James Leary, Charles F. Williams, Nathaniel R. Mills, and Henry Steers. There were but three police inspectors during the Civil War period, Daniel Carpenter, James Leonard, and George W. Dilks, all Americans.

When the draft riots broke out in 1863, the police department had more than it could handle effectually. After the bat-

tle of Gettysburg, troops were rushed to New York and in combination with the police stopped rioting in short order. It was never ascertained how many of the rioters were killed, but it is safe to say several thousands died from bullets and police clubs. When the rioters attacked and wrecked the Tribune composing room and offices at the old building on Park Row, I saw the police charge under Inspector Carpenter and I shall never fail to realize what a terrible weapon a long and heavy police baton is. The police, two abreast, with the inspector at their head, went through the dense crowd like a plow through mellow earth, the clubs rising and falling. With each blow a man went down brained or so badly battered that "the subsequent proceedings interested him no more." The police had no time to make arrests and if they had, the jails of the city could not have afforded room for the prisoners.

The cause of the draft riots, or rather their excuse, arose from the fact that Army enlistments were so slow that the Government was compelled to institute a draft. Rioting began the day the drafting offices were open. There were no troops available as the great majority of the men of the State militia were in the armies, and the neighboring fortifications had each only a bare corporal's guard as caretakers. For several red days the mob had its own way, the police being almost powerless. A man in military uniform was murdered on sight. Negroes were slaughtered on the streets and the colored orphan asylum up town was fired after about all the inmates had been put to death. After murdering some hundreds of inoffensive persons, the mob turned its attention to the residences of the well-to-do people on Fifth Avenue and other avenues. Whole blocks of these houses were looted, and what was not taken away was destroyed. The huts and shanties in the squat-





*Scenes in the Draft Riot. The lower right hand scene is described in the text.*





ter settlements were provided with lace curtains, elaborate bedsteads, pianos, fine table ware, and other furnishings to be found only in the homes of wealthy owners. It was a genuine reign of terror, and the next thing decided upon was to loot the banks and other places of money deposit. Fortunately Lee was in retreat from Gettysburg, and the troops sent on to New York put those riots down in bloody fashion. It is a difficult matter at this day to procure a full history of the draft riots as the political ring suppressed all publications bearing on the subject.

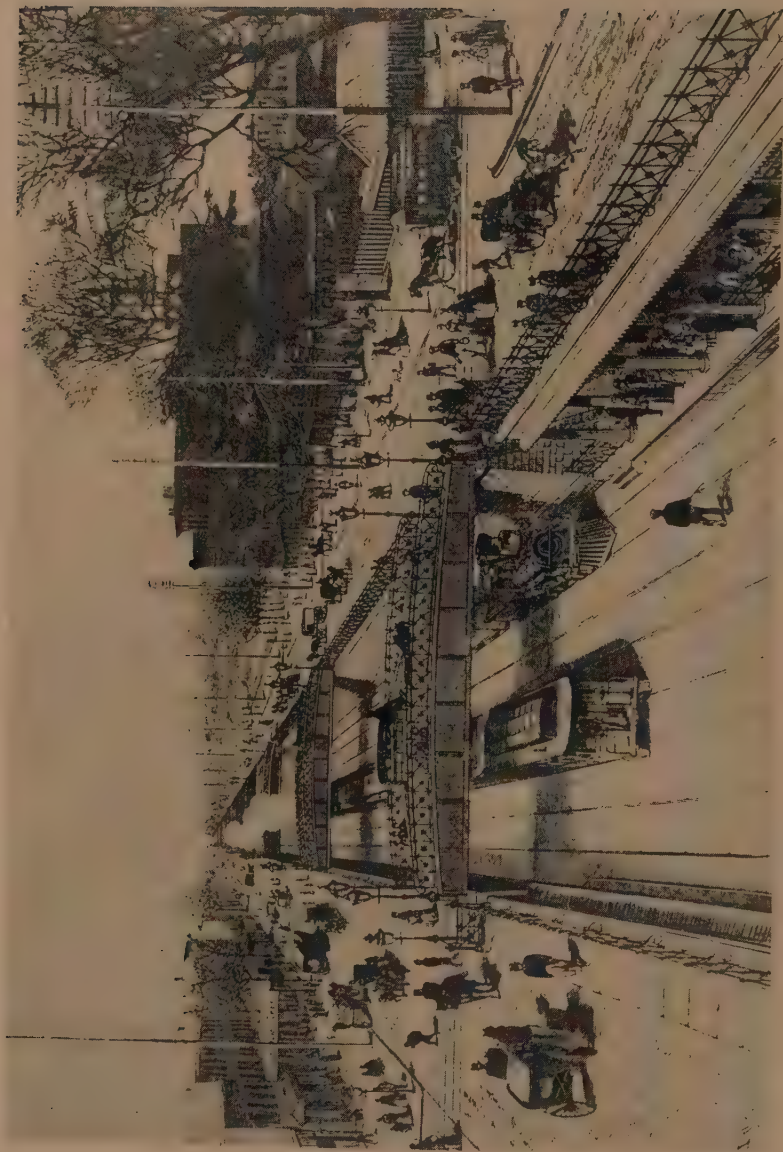
In the late sixties, Charles McDonnell, formerly a roundsman, had been promoted to the rank of Captain. A very efficient official and a terror to evil-doers, Captain McDonnell, active in brain and movement, gained the name of "Lightning Charley." One night in passing down Bleeker Street, when near Sullivan Street, he encountered a group of negroes, as that section was in the "black belt" at that time. As he had about passed through the group, one of the negroes struck him and knocked him down. McDonnell picked himself up, took the middle of the street and made his way back to the station-house where he ordered out the off squad with their night sticks. In the meantime the negroes, nearly two dozen in all, had gone into a corner basement. Sending a couple of men to guard the rear, the rest of the policemen went inside. Then began a performance that was afterward the talk of the town. The clubs rose and fell, the air was full of yells and screams, and when the policemen were through every negro was on the floor and the place looked like a slaughter house. No arrests were made as the Captain was satisfied that his "club-logic" was sufficient to tranquilize the neighborhood and so it proved.

The police uniform of the sixties and seventies was much

as it is today, except that the men wore "wideawake" caps. In the warm months the uniform was of white linen, with brass buttons, the coat worn open, and broad-brimmed panama hats covered the heads. The old force, considering its numbers, was a good one, the majority of the men were native Americans and that fact spoke for efficiency.

In the sixties and seventies New York's "Finest" had no horses to ride, no street telephones, no auto wagons, and the harbor police in exploring the docks depended upon rowboats propelled by their own stout arms.





*The "Fourth Avenue Improvements" at 126th Street, looking South, in 1873.*



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## XI.

### THE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

WHEN I was old enough to look around, there were eleven street car lines, to say nothing of the bus routes in New York. Subways were undreamed of then, and rail travel in those days was deliberate and very slow. A common sight in 1860 was a white street car with the sign: "For Colored People Only." In 1863 there was no such thing as a Jim Crow car in the city, and if the draft rioters had carried their point, there would not have been a negro left to ride, anyway. Street cars were moved by horse power, engineered by husky drivers who had to stand all kinds of weather in the open. The passengers in winter kept their feet warm in a deep bed of straw, assisted by a heavy shawl worn across the knees. In these days of rapid transit, overhead and underground, the younger generation has no conception of what discomforts New Yorkers had to endure sixty and more years ago in street transportation. The weather sharps contend that there have been no changes in snowfalls and the like; still I have seen the streets of New York so filled with the "beautiful" that cars could not run and immense, highly ornamented sleighs, drawn by four to six horses, took the place of omnibuses for the time being. The longest of the street car lines were the Eighth and Third Avenue routes, running from the Astor House to 125th Street and to Harlem Bridge at 130th Street, taking over two hours to cover the eight miles. The New York and Harlem, New York and New Haven and Hudson River steam roads ran horse cars connecting with the depots at Fourth Avenue and 27th Street, Chambers Street and

West Broadway near the old Ridley candy factory, and Tenth Avenue and 30th Street. The 27th Street depot was the site of the past Madison Square Garden, the steam cars being drawn by horses through the Fourth Avenue tunnel to where the Grand Central Station now is, where the locomotives were coupled on. North and east of Central Park the street car lines ran over filled in streets, the hollows between being cultivated by market gardeners. Where Morningside Park now is was Shantytown, a collection of squatters' cabins, with goats, hogs and geese running at large. In the northwest corner of the island, the nearest line of communication being the Eighth Avenue car line, was Manhattanville, a rural retreat peopled by the wealthy element. The Daniel F. Tiemann residence on 127th Street was the first approached from the south. On the higher ground, overlooking Spuyten Duyvil Creek were the old homes of John J. Audubon, the naturalist, and The Grange, with its thirteen trees, emblematic of the original States, built by Alexander Hamilton, where he died.

Further south, on the Hudson River side, were the James Gordon Bennett mansion, and St. Vincent's Convent, a castellated structure, built by Edwin Forrest, the tragedian. To the eastward was, and still is, the Jumel mansion. One Sunday morning I saw the once celebrated beauty hobbling along in her garden, a withered, bent old woman.

The street railway magnates of my young days were George Law, John Kerr, Wm. A. Dowling, John Butler, Jr., D. M. Hughes, Sidney Mason and Jacob Sharp. Sharp in later years was mixed up with the Broadway Street Car franchise scandal, and was heavily mulcted by the courts. In 1869 the pioneer elevated railway was opened to the public, running through Greenwich Street to Ninth Avenue, terminating at





*The Fulton Ferry—"Built of Iron in 1863."*



*Grand Central Depot.*

21st Street. The first motive power was by cables operated by engines stationed at intervals under the sidewalks. The racket made by the cables running down the hollow standards to the drums in the engine rooms was unendurable, and in a short time dummy engines were put on to haul the trains. Then the road was extended to Harlem River at 155th Street.

The eight omnibus lines all connected with the ferries. Murphy and Smith controlling the Madison Avenue line, were the heaviest operators, having fifty-five two-horse stages. The omnibus lines grew with the city and were the only means of transportation on Broadway. Before the great bridges and tunnels were thought of the only means of connection with Manhattan Island were the ferries, twenty in all, of which seven were on North River and the others on the East River. We were indebted to John Stevens of Hoboken for the first steam ferry boat and to Robert Fulton for the floating ferry bridges, raised and lowered by the tides. From start to finish the Hoboken ferries were controlled by the Stevens family, whose mansion at Castle Point is still a New Jersey landmark. Each ferry company had its way of naming the boats. The Hoboken double-enders were named for inventors, the Jersey City boats after well known cities and the East River boats after oceans and seas. The ferry pilots were skilled men and to their credit accidents were extremely few. The Fulton ferry from New York to Brooklyn, although the shortest was the most dangerous of all, owing to the swift tides in the narrowest part of the river. Two of the best of the Fulton ferry wheelmen were the brothers, Jack and Bill Baulsir, who knew every current and eddy in the river. In the winter, when heavy ice was coming down the North River on the ebb tide, it was a common thing for a Jersey ferry boat to be caught



in a field and carried down the bay to Staten Island, where the boat was obliged to anchor until flood tide set in. More than once it was possible to cross the ice on foot from the Battery to Communipaw.

The taxies of the sixties and seventies were commonly known as "hacks," generally closed carriages drawn by a pair of horses. After a while cabriolets, after the English style, were introduced but were never popular. All these modes of transportation were slow, compared with the present styles of locomotion, but New Yorkers took life easier then.





*Donald McKay, Clipper Ship Builder.*

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## XII.

### SHIPS AND SAILORS

THE real romance of the sea departed when the sailing ships had to give way to the steam propelled vessel. During the period of which I write, South Street, from Coenties Slip to Roosevelt Street, was a forest of ship spars, the flying jibbooms of some of the largest vessels projecting almost into the office windows directly opposite. Some of the ships were of the Black Ball and Collins lines, emigrant vessels running between Liverpool and New York. One of the most famous of these was the Dreadnaught, commanded by Captain Sam Samuels, which made many quick passages between ports. But the chief objects of the South Street piers were the clipper ships in the China tea and Australian trades. The most beautiful manual creation of man was the clipper ship, the king of builders being Donald McKay of Boston, whose crowning glory was the Great Republic, the largest sailing vessel in existence of that day. Unfortunately, this ship was burned at the Roosevelt Street pier when ready for sea. She was raised and rigged, carrying four masts, and although her cargo capacity was reduced, she still was the largest of her type. Captain Nat Palmer was her master until his retirement. I saw this ship several times but never got aboard of her, as the ship keepers had no use for small boys. However, I kept "tab" on the ships, and as I grew older when I saw a lofty clipper I went aboard and asked permission to go aloft. Generally the answer was: "All right, ef ye don't break yer neck." No fear, as I could climb like a cat, and on more than one main truck I wrote my name in bold letters. One of the last ships I thus

decorated was the *Glory of the Seas*, a McKay creation, as she laid at the Erie stores on the Brooklyn side. Looking down from the dizzy height on her long and narrow deck, I was struck with her beautiful proportions, and the neatness of her "harbor stowed" sails, with the turks heads, wall and crowned and pointed ropes, work only known to the seasoned sailor.

Like many boys raised in the salt air, I had a liking for ships and sailors. Given my own way I would have taken to the sea life, not so much for the fancied romance of it as a desire to see the world at large and the world of waters in all its moods. The first novel I ever read was Dickens' *Dombey and Son*, and I have read it a dozen times since. In my opinion, one of the finest characters in fiction is, to quote himself: "E'dard Cuttle, mariner of England," an outstanding picture of a bluff, honest, and loving sailor. His affection for those of his own calling he expressed in his characteristic way: "Give me the lad with the tarry trousers which shines to me like di'monds bright," and that saying has always found an echo in my own heart. I looked up to those master mariners I happened to see and know of as demi-gods, men born to command, fearless navigators who took *The Flag* in honor to all parts of the earth, and a type of Americans that unhappily has passed away.

Sometimes off the Hook I have seen clippers coming into port with all working sail set, like snow white swans in their majestic progress. That was a sight to remember, such as you of the younger generation will never see, except in pictures. The famous *Flying Cloud* passed before I fairly knew what a ship was, but I had the honor of seeing her equally famous master, Captain Joe Creesy, a splendid specimen of an American sailor and commander of men. I also saw the clipper ship



the Shenandoah, built by the Sewells of Maine before her sailing days had ended. Her last voyage was epochal. This ship was in the China trade. Enroute home she touched at San Francisco. There Captain Murphy received orders from the Boston owners to bring her home, the ship to be dismantled and laid up as a hulk. "When the Shenandoah is laid up for good, I shall bid farewell to the sea," was her veteran commander's resolve. Down the Pacific to the Horn she flew with fair winds and "made her easting" almost without starting a halyard or brace. When fairly up the eastern coast of South America into the region of the doldrums, Captain Murphy set his crew to work painting the ship inside and out, brightening the metal work and all the odd jobs employed in placing a vessel in "ship shape and Bristol fashion." All that done, snowy white sails were brought from the sail room and bent. All finished, the Shenandoah was as brilliant as a beautiful lady dressed for a ball or the opera. Well into the Carribean, with a steady breeze from the southward, smoke was seen ahead, evidently from a steam vessel southward bound. As the stranger's tophammer and hull arose above the horizon, it was seen by her rig and ensign that it was one of Uncle Sam's game cocks, really the Wabash bound for the South Atlantic station. As the Shenandoah was sighted, the watch below on the Wabash came on deck and all hands swarmed on the hammock nettings and in the rigging. As the Shenandoah came abreast of the warship, her jackies yelled with delight at the beautiful sight, while the officers on the quarter-decks of the ships exchanged salutes. As the Shenandoah swept astern of the Wabash thirteen guns were fired from the warrior, the first time on record that a merchant vessel was saluted by a ship of war. I can imagine the pride of sturdy Captain Murphy at

this compliment and his grief at the thought that it was the last voyage of his darling of the sea.

Well, it is possible the sailing ship, with auxiliary power will come in again. There are plenty of schooners, and square riggers to compete with them would have to employ engines for the heavy work, with necessarily smaller crews. At the hands of such men as McKay, the Sewells, Webb and Bell, ship-building more nearly approached an art than a handicraft.

To the practiced eye, each ship berthing along South Street had its individuality. Each had its peculiarities of build and rig. It was very easy to distinguish a vessel hailing from the Baltic or North Sea, or a "lime-juicer" from a British port. The crews were of mixed nationalities, as a rule, as the time had passed when Americans took to the merchant service. The Scandinavian ships were mostly manned by Scandinavians, and it sometimes occurred that an American clipper had a crew of Malays, good sailors but inefficient in winter weather. Although our ships carried mixed crews the officers were invariably Americans, and as master mariners there were not their superiors the world over.

The Scandinavian sailors were a hardy lot. I have seen a ship coming up the bay under tow, in the face of a bitter cold north wind, her crew on the yards stowing sail. All they wore were dungaree trousers tucked in sea boots, a flannel shirt open at the neck and an old fur or woolen cap. Bare handed they fisted the sails stiff with ice from frozen spray, and sometimes were hours on a yard before they got a furl. For hardihood I know of no men to compare with them but the Gloucester fishermen.

When "Old Ironsides" came to New York after the Civil



*View on South Street.*



War, I rowed around her while she was anchored off Paulus Hook. When they took her to the Brooklyn Navy Yard I went aboard of her one afternoon and inspected every part of her but the tops, where no landsmen were allowed to go. I would have sacrificed a lot to write my name on the Constitution's main truck. She was changed considerably from her original fittings, but the old lines were there, and they even let stand the old legend, "Don't Give Up the Ship," painted near the great main hatch. Long before I saw the Constitution, I got venerable Commodore Wm. D. Salter, who was a midshipman on the old ship when she whipped the Guerrier, to tell me all about that memorable battle. I have often wondered how I induced that gruff old salt to condescend so much, as he didn't like boys.

Old New Yorkers who were familiar with South Street will remember many of those monarchs of the quarter deck such as Captains Nat Palmer, Philip Dumoresque, Dave Babcock, N. B. Low, Lachlan McKay, Arthur Clark and Sam Samuels. Captain Palmer, in his young manhood, in a sealing voyage to the Antarctic Circle, discovered Palmer's Land. After retiring from the sea he took great interest in yachting, and the famous schooner Palmer, of the New York Yacht Club, was named for him. Captain Clark made an invaluable contribution to nautical literature when he published his book, *The Clipper Ship Era*. Sam Samuels was a packet skipper until the bulk of emigration passed to the steamers. He was master of the yacht Henrietta during the ocean race to Cowes, England, when she defeated the Vesta and Fleeting, all three of which I saw pass out of the harbor for that contest. Captain McKay was a brother of Donald, the builder, and had an owner's interest in several of his ships. All these men were of

the salt sea salty in appearance, except Captain Clark, who looked more like a prosperous business man.

Often while haunting the South Street piers I have entered the offices of Low & Co., Grinnell & Minturn, the Suttons, Griswolds and other ship owners and collected illustrated shipping cards. A collection of those cards would be of considerable value today.

South Street at the period of which I write was lined with shipping offices, warehouses, Chandler and junk shops, with a drinking saloon on each corner. At the foot of Maiden Lane laid the Seamen's Bethel, a floating church, presided over by "Father" Edw. Taylor, who was what we may call a pan-churchman, as all humanity, irrespective of religion was welcome at his house of worship. A former sailor and understanding sailors, he led many a hardened sinner to grace. He was numbered with the saints years ago.



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### XIII.

## THE STEAMBOATS

**I**N my chapter on transportation, I omitted mention of the steamboats, as they are worthy of more detailed description. New Yorkers have always taken pride in the steamboats and naturally so, as it was from one of the city's piers that the first successful trip was made by a vessel under steam power. As with the sailing vessels, the builders were constantly improving on the models and fittings and the American steamboat of today admittedly has no superior. It was a far cry from the Clermont of 1807 to the steamboats that traversed the Hudson River in the sixties and seventies. The first trip from New York to Albany covered thirty-two hours, a passage none of the crack river sloops could approach, but the time was cut down year by year until it was reduced to a little under seven hours in 1864 by the Chauncy Vibbard, built by Lawrence and Sneden of Brooklyn, in the year of her launching.

Increase in length and tonnage and height of superstructures kept pace with the increase of river travel, which had nearly reached the apex by 1863, when the St. John on the Albany Line was the largest boat launched up to that year. Such boats as the Hendrik Hudson and the Princeton in present operation, could almost carry one of the vessels built in the forties on their decks. Still, in models, speed, and appointments, the finest boats of the sixties and seventies were not far behind the present-day craft. The Daniel Drew, St. John, New World, and Dean Richmond of the Peoples Line, were very superior vessels, the hulls with stream lines as fine as those

of yachts. The *New World*, built in 1847, was far in advance of her time, a four-decker of nearly 1,500 tons, and she flourished up to 1863, when she was broken up and her engines were placed in the *St. John*. Outside of the *Fall River*, *Hartford*, and *Providence* lines, nearly all the large boats on the North River ran up the Hudson, some as far as Troy. Among the best-known were the *Rip Van Winkle*, wrecked in 1872; the *Thomas Cornell*; the *Isaac Newton*, burned in 1863; the *Alida*, for years on the Albany Line and later used as a tow-boat; the *Armenia*, and the *Mary Powell*.

The *Mary Powell*, queen of the river, was for years captained by A. L. Anderson, succeeded by his son, A. E. Anderson. She was triple-decked, beautifully modeled, and carried her boilers on the sponsons, which made it easier for the firemen but not so comfortable for the passengers. Many of the boats had their boilers on the main deck. The *Mary Powell* was famed for her speed, as she averaged 20 miles per hour and in spurts had run 26 miles. One of her fastest runs was from her New York pier to Nyack, twenty-eight miles, in one hour and seventeen minutes.

Three of the boats, the *Armenia*, *Glen Cove*, and *General Sedgwick*, carried calliopes, which were given up as they used too much steam. The *Sedgwick* was burned in the seventies with a large number of excursionists, which was a nine-day horror.

Long a familiar figure on New York Bay was the *Richard Stockton* that ran to South Amboy, New Jersey, carrying passengers for the Camden and Amboy Railroad, long since absorbed by the Pennsylvania system. The *Stockton* was provided with small feathering paddle wheels having broad buckets, driven by very powerful engines. She was speedy and made





*On board the "Palace Steamer" Massachusetts, en route from New York to Providence via Long Island Sound.*

her trips on railroad time, but the noise of her paddles was so annoying that she became unpopular.

The Long Branch, formerly the Sleepy Hollow, ran to the then fashionable watering place, the terminus at the Highland Lights on the Navesink. The Helen, a crank craft, and the Nelly White also ran to Long Branch. The queen of their type of single pipe boats was the Matteawan, running between New York and Keyport, New Jersey, commanded in turn by Captain Henry Bishop and Thomas V. Arrowsmith. The "Mattie" was a very fast boat, the speediest ever built by Samuel Terry of Keyport, and was credited with making the twenty-seven mile run in less than one and a half hours. Other single pipers, open to miscellaneous charter, were the Thomas P. Way, the Thomas Hunt, the P. C. Schultz, the Naushon, the Only Son, with "steeple" walking beams. The Only Son, generally used as a paddle towboat, had her sides built up and sent around the Horn to Oregon, where she was engaged in towing service on the Columbia River for some years.

Another old-timer of the single pipe order was the Red Jacket, running from the foot of Liberty Street to Elizabethport, then the terminus of the New Jersey Central Railroad, alternating trips with the Kill von Kull. The Red Jacket was burned at her New York berth and her hull raised and a new superstructure built. After that she was known as the Chancellor.

On the East River the single pipers ran to Morrisania and Long Island ports, as far east as Oyster Bay. Among those well found and handy boats were the Pleasant Valley, the Sylvan Dell, the Sylvan Stream, and the Sewanaka. The Sewanaka was burned after getting into the Sound, with a great loss of life.



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#### XIV.

### SPORTS AND PASTIMES

**N**OW I shall enlarge to the best of my ability upon a subject of interest to the young folk of today. Of course, you have your sports and pastimes, but I doubt if the younger generation enjoy themselves a bit more than the old-timers. By the sixties baseball had become a national sport, but had not yet reached the professional stage. The real father of baseball was Abner Doubleday, who later in life became a Major-General and one of the noted commanders in the Federal Army during the War of 1861-5. He laid out the dimensions of the baseball field, which still hold good, and formulated the rules of the game. The first ball club to play under the new dispensation was the Knickerbocker Club of our city, which had a life of over forty years. Then came the Gothams and Mutuals, followed by clubs in the neighboring cities. Brooklyn had the Atlantics, Excelsiors, and Eckfords; Jersey City the Pavonias; and Hoboken the Kearsage clubs.

The Excelsior had the famous battery, Asa Creighton and Joe Leggatt, but the Atlantics had a nine that for years kept Brooklyn in the champion class. Their foremost players were Matt and Pete O'Brien, Dick Pierce, Joe Start, Jack Chapman, Al Pratt and Charley Mills. Pratt was the Atlantic's pitcher, the ball being delivered by an underhand swing. Later Pratt was replaced by George Zettlein, the first of the swift pitchers. Start and Chapman became professionals and I saw both play in games in the late eighties. Start was a star first-baseman, and "Plump" Jack Chapman a great left-fielder. Among the Mutuals were Crum, Furlong, Pike, Dockney, Martin, Hat-







Great Baseball Match between the Atlantic and Eckford Clubs of Brooklyn, at the Union Baseball Grounds, with portraits of the leading players of the principal Clubs of New York, Brooklyn and Newark.

field, Walters, and Martin, the pitcher. Martin pitched a moderately fast ball with a twist to it which was difficult to hit. The secret was that it had a drop to it, or curve, which feature was further developed by the present overhand throw.

The Atlantics and the Mutuals were great rivals, the Brooklyn Club generally winning when they came together. Their last big game at the Hoboken Elysian Fields in the late sixties was witnessed by over ten thousand people, a large crowd in those days, and stood ten to twelve at the close, in favor of the Atlantics. Really at that period it was a fielders' game; now "the battery" are the chief factors.

In the early stages of baseball, the game was played with bare hands; no gloves, masks, pads, or shin-guards went then, and never a player who retired without misshapen digits. The regulation ball was made by Van Horn and called the Bounding Rock. It was very hard and elastic but terribly hard on the hands. The leading clubs of the cities finally became semi-professional, not paying salaries but furnishing the men with political jobs, such as sidewalk inspectorships, and all they had to do was play ball. With the amateurs the season began early in the spring and ended on Thanksgiving Day when the ground was generally frozen hard. The beauty of baseball was that every vigorous boy or young man could take part in it. As a form of athletics calculated to develop every muscle, to expand the lungs, to quicken the sight and action, I know of nothing to excel it.

Next to baseball, horse-racing, called the "sport of kings," was a leading divertisement before the unfortunate call to war cut it short. About all the running tracks of the country became grass grown, but on the return of peace, flat racing was revived. The first track in the neighborhood of New York

opened to the saddle racers was at Seacaucus, New Jersey, on a ridge jutting into the Hackensack meadows. This track was mainly operated by Col. R. McDaniel, owner of the long-distance stallion, Harry Bassett, a vicious brute, but a brilliant racehorse. The track was not favorably situated and after a season or so was abandoned. Jerome Park, "the saddlebags track," now the site of a city reservoir, had in the meantime come into existence. Matched against Harry Bassett, the stallion Monarchist, owned by Sir Roderick Cameron, won a four-mile heat race at Jerome Park that drew an immense concourse of people. Two other famous horses that raced over this track in the period I am endeavoring to cover were Longfellow and Ten Broeck, both great at long distances. The principal racing men at that time were August Belmont, Sr., Leonard Jerome, W. G. Harding, T. W. Doswell, J. J. Bevins, E. S. Sanford, R. A. Alexander, Pierre and George Lorillard, J. J. Donahue, Gen. Abe Buford, Theodore Winter, Mark ("Lucky") Baldwin, Price McGrath, Richard Ten Broeck and Aristides Welch.

The Union, Fashion, and Centerville Courses on Long Island, were devoted to harness racing. During the Civil War, up to 1870, there were occasional matches which brought together such horses as the flying gaited Ethan Allen, George M. Patchen, Dexter, General Butler, John Morgan, and the teams Bruno and Brunette, and Lady Palmer and Flatbush Maid. The prominent trainers and drivers of that time were Hiram Woodruff, Dan Pfifer, Sim Hoagland, Dave Bryan, Bill Whelan, J. D. McMann, Horace Jones, Dri. Tallman, Dan Mace, and John Crooks.

Dexter, first owned by George B. Alley, afterward by Robert Bonner, was the most popular horse of his time. No other

horse resembled him in conformation and style, and no artist who essayed to paint a likeness of him made a failure of it. Dexter was synonymous of speed, and his was a familiar figure on omnibuses and weather vanes. More than once my chum and I played hookey to see Mr. Bonner drive by behind his famous horse.

Prior to the Revolution there was a mile race track on the Church Farm, west of Broadway, extending from Barclay to Duane Street, but the Continental Congress abolished it. The next race track on the island was at Mount Morris, north of what is now Central Park. The last track in the city was known as the Red House Track at Second Avenue and 110th Street. Over this track Flora Temple trotted her first race, which was in 1850. Lew Rogers was the track proprietor for more than ten years. This half-mile course was closed in the late sixties.

After the Fashion, Union, and Centerville tracks passed, a new one was laid out at Prospect Park (not the present park), which in after years was used by the Brooklyn Jockey Club, with the Suburban as the chief annual feature. Originally a trotting track, over it performed such old-time horses as Lady Thorn, Goldsmith Maid, and American Girl. Also, at this track the celebrated reinsman, John Splan, began his career.

The Fleetwood track at Morisania lasted long enough to be included in the city. It was built in the early seventies and no race course was ever constructed under greater difficulties. Its shape was much like that of a painter's palette, as the regulation form could not be followed. The first quarter was filled in, the home stretch on a slight down grade. Beyond the half-mile pole the constructors had to blast through solid rock, following an irregular up-grade course. This was known as The Point of Rocks and was very hard on a tired horse. Per



consequence it was not a fast track, but many an exciting harness race was held over it.

After the Gates Barnard's lease expired, the Driving Club of New York was organized and they used the track to the close. This club was composed of such men as William H. Vanderbilt, William Fullerton, T. C. Eastman, Sheppard F. Knapp, William Turnbull, Robert and David Bonner, Frank Work, Col. Lawrence Kip, Alberto de Cordova, Mathew Riley, John Harbeck, and Captain Jake Vanderbilt, all horse owners and fine amateur drivers who took part in many friendly races. At the regular Fleetwood meetings, among the old-time horses that contended in races or against time were Lucy, Lucille, Great Eastern, Lula, Rarus, St. Julien, Maud S., Jay Eye See, and Trinket.

Previous to 1860 what we knew afterwards as road driving was indulged in only by market men and small tradesmen. The butchers prided themselves upon their fast stepping trotters hitched to carts, and Sundays were selected to try them out against each other. The favorite trial grounds were the Bloomingdale Road and Harlem Lane, this last named running from the northwest of Central Park to Manhattanville. Robert Bonner taking to road driving on account of ill health, soon made it a gentleman's recreation, and so it continued up to the time when the "gas wagons" drove horses from the road. Road driving in New York reached its apex when the "Sealskin Brigade" turned out by the thousands when sleighing was good. Seventh Avenue from the park to McComb's Dam Bridge was the favorite drive, and it was a magnificent sight when the avenue was thronged with sleighs of all descriptions, the horses with straps of silvery bells, all glittering





*Fast trotters on Harlem Lane.*



in their finery. It's all gone, my boy—we shall never see its like again.

Football as you know it today is quite different from what was known in my young days. We wore no noseguards or paddings. The game was played with the feet and no one thought of signals or bucking the line. Plain rush and kick, action all the time until a goal was made, and if a player was hurt it was only through a collision or a hard kick on the shins.

Shinny, now called hockey, was a fall-weather game, played with crooked sticks cut in the woods and a rubber ball. Also, a great game on the ice. In the rough play a crack "on the bean" was common, but I never heard of a player being seriously injured.

Chief of the aquatic sports, outside of yachting, were the sculling matches by amateurs and professionals, and races between college crews. Among the best of Manhattan professional oarsmen were the Biglin brothers, John and Barney, and Walter Brown. Of visiting oarsmen who competed with Gothamites were the river fishermen, the Ward brothers of Newburgh, Jimmy TenEyck, Jimmy Hamill, John McKeel, Henry Coulter, James Renforth, and Ned Hanlon.

As horses race in all forms, so it was with the oarsmen. Hamill, Coulter, and Hanlon were thickset, short-armed men, while the others were tall, wide-chested and long-armed. Renforth died in his boat at St. John, N. B., from apoplexy. John McKeel, an up-river man, had original ideas as to training. While preparing for the Centennial races at Philadelphia, McKeel was in the habit of rowing and doing road work with his body bare, tanning to a mahogany hue. Physicians warned him against that, but he persisted and liver complaint was the result, as predicted. The Ward boys won a race from the Bat-

tery boatmen, but had a hard job doing it. The Battery men were more used to their seventeen-foot boats than a four-oared shell.

Harlem River was a famous rendezvous of the amateur clubs, there being a number of them occupying the north bank. One of the best of the single scullers was Jim Pilkington, whose Golden Oar on the Harlem was a popular resort.

Athletics as we know them, were sporadic in the sixties. Professionals like John Sheffield, and Deer Foot, the Oneida Indian, gave exhibitions of running and doing half a dozen stunts in a given time. Athletics began to look up with the advent of William B. Curtis ("Father Bill"), an all-round athlete, who was credited with a weight lift of over 3,200 pounds. Curtis was one of the organizers of the New York Athletic Club that developed such amateur champions as Phillips, the skater, Murray the pedestrian, Ru. Schack, the dumb-bell lifter, and Myers the sprinter. They were all before your time, dear boy, and you know more about the later champions than I do.

Bill Curtis was a remarkable man. In the five years I was with him as a fellow worker I got to know him very well. In appearance he would not be taken as a man of more than ordinary strength. Height about five feet nine inches, weight about 180 pounds, a decided brunette, wearing a closely trimmed beard and mustache, quick in his movements and very plain in apparel. I never knew a man who had greater command of himself nor one more sure of himself. It was not generally known that Curtis was a great mathematician, so skilled that he was frequently appealed to by professors of mathematics to solve problems put up to them.

Of his amazing strength, I have seen several of his im-

promptu exhibitions. Once he lifted at arm's length a man weighing 150 pounds, seated in a heavy arm chair. He grasped the chair by the front round, raised it with ease, holding the weight straight out, and lowered it gently to the floor. Another time he tried the broom stick grip test with another strong man. Between the two of them the broomstick was reduced to small splinters. He was a great hammer thrower, a powerful oarsman and swimmer, and when it came to a "hike," Father Bill was right there with the youngsters.

I never saw Curtis out of temper but once. He and I, with a lot of others, had been to the pier to see Lon Myers off for Europe. Returning to the office we found Church Street so jammed with vehicles that we could not get across. While standing at the curb, a young fellow pushed past, stepping on Bill's feet, making no apology. Presently the chap came back and again trespassed upon "Curt's" shoe leather. With eyes snapping, Bill collared the fellow, raised him in the air, giving a twist of his wrist as he did so. The chap landed in an empty express wagon that was passing and sat up with a comical expression of bewilderment, nor did he come back to see how it had happened.

Another time I went with Curtis to the office of the Police Gazette to get some information concerning an old-time prize fight, in answer to an inquirer through our Question and Answers column. While Proprietor Richard K. Fox was looking up the record, "Curt" was going along the walls examining the pictures and trophies on exhibition. In a corner stood a huge indian club. When "Curt" reached the club, he took hold of it, raised it twice on a level with his eyes and replaced it. Fox, with open mouth and bulging eyes was regarding the



action. Rushing to his desk, Fox made out a check and handed it to Curtis.

"What for?" asked "Curt."

"Didn't you read the card?" Fox replied. "It says, 'Fifty dollars to the man who can chin this club.' You did it twice, when men like Mat Sorakiki failed; I ought to make the check for a hundred."

Sandow, the French strong man, electrified the athletic world by his feats, but declined a challenge of a friend of Curtis, who offered to bet a large sum that Curtis could perform all Sandow's feats and do things that the foreign athlete could not do. When I last saw William B. Curtis he was near his sixtieth year, still not a particle of gray appeared in his hair and beard and he was as active and vigorous as a man twenty years younger. With all his great bodily powers he had a leaky heart, but that complaint did not cause his death. Years after I read of his desperate struggle for life in a blizzard on Mount Washington, and he had no sincerer mourner for his melancholy passing. Peace to his remains.

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## XV.

### YACHTING

**N**OW I come to the subject that engages your interest more strongly than any other in the realm of outdoor recreation. If horse racing is the king of sports on land, yachting is the king of sports on water. For nearly ninety years the New York Yacht Club has been in existence and in the world of sport has an enviable history. Like the old-time sailing ships, the yachts have had their evolution but not to a radical extent. Changes in models and sails have been brought about, but I doubt if the element of speed has greatly advanced, as the builders of old were skilled men and constructed many beautiful and fast vessels.

John C. Stevens of the noted Stevens family of Hoboken, was a man of genius, always interested in maritime affairs and a devoted yachtsman. The yacht *Maria* he had built after his design not long after the New York Yacht Club was organized, and for some years she was one of the crack crafts of the club. Originally the *Maria* was a centerboard sloop, carrying an enormous mainsail which was hard to handle. She was altered to a schooner, with winches installed to raise the heavier sails. Her masts were over two feet in diameter, with the after parts ratcheted, pawls in the gaff jaws engaging in the ratches, and tripped when the sails were lowered. The *Maria* was out of commission for good by 1865 and was tied alongside the Morris and Essex Railroad bridge on the Hackensack River. More than once my chum and I caught crabs and tom cods from her deck.

First and foremost in yachting minds in the early sixties

was the famous America, winner of the cup which has been contended for so many times and is still with us. The America was modeled after the Baltimore pilot boat plan, than which there were no finer sea boats, but was built at a New York Yard. After her victory at Cowes, Isle of Wight, she passed to several English owners who tried to improve her by heavier bulwarks, shorter spars and changes in sails, which deadened her speed. Her last British owner put her to blockade running under the name of Memphis. She was sunk off Jacksonville, Florida, raised by the Government and turned over to the Naval Academy at Annapolis to serve as a training ship. After the America cup race in 1871 she was sold to General Ben Butler and restored to her old form, used as a private yacht. She is again at the Naval Academy good as ever.

As for the America Cup, that like our National flag is "still there," I venture a personal opinion. I think that instead of sailing for the cup with fin-keels and other nondescripts that cannot stand heavy weather, it should be sailed for by schooners, furnished with the sails in vogue, no auxiliary power to be used. That would be fair for both sides and a proper test of weatherly qualities as well as seamanship. With schooners as contestants, there would be no necessity of breaking up of the crafts after the race, as they would still be useful and the initial expenditure not a dead loss.

There were no steam yachts in the New York Club fleet until late in the seventies, the racing vessels being all sail and plainer sail than they carry today, outside of spinakers and ringtails. To give you an idea as to what they looked like, a few of their pictures are reproduced. The schooners of the period included the Dauntless, Rambler, Sappho, Fleetwing,





COURTESY OF P. GRAY GRISWOLD

*The Yacht "Henrietta," owned by James Gordon Bennett, Jr., Winner of the Ocean Race with "Fleetwing" and Vesta," in 1866*



Vesta, Henrietta, Palmer, Gracie, Madeline, Enchantress, Idler, Magic, Mohawk and Grayling.

The Rambler, owned by William H. Thomas, afterwards by J. M. Forbes, was the largest of the fleet and twice won the Brenton Reef Cup. The Dreadnaught, Idler, and Enchantress were winners of the Cape May Challenge Cup in the seventies. The Mohawk, owned by Commodore William T. Garner, was connected with a tragedy. One sunny afternoon the Commodore with all his family and some guests, boarded the Mohawk at anchor off Vanderbilt's Landing at Staten Island. The intention was to have a sail out past the Hook. The sails were partly up when one of those "willywas" or puffs of wind eddying around the hills struck the Mohawk. She heeled, overrode the cable and was over in an instant. The party were below in the cabin and there trapped, all were drowned. A few years after the Grayling was caught in such a twister just as she had cleared Fort Wadsworth. She capsized, but as her people were on deck no lives were lost. This schooner was owned by Latham Fish.

Commodore Voorhees of Nyack, N. Y., owned the Madeline, Franklin Osgood was owner of the Sappho, William H. Langley owned the Gracie, and Pierre Lorillard was the owner of the Vesta.

The annual Club regatta was held in the fall when all the craft took part, and a beautiful sight it was. With the snowy sails and graceful hulls the old-time schooner yacht vied in beauty with the clipper ships. You can see such craft today but the majority of them are provided with auxiliary power. The regattas of the long ago were ably reported by Captain Roland G. Coffin, a Nantucketer, and of the salt sea salty.

A yacht that was of note in ante-bellum times was the

Wanderer, but I never saw her. She had a very bad reputation, as after having been given up as a pleasure craft she became a slaver and report had it that she also flew the skull and cross bones; her true history was never written.

The first ocean race between New York yachts became of national interest because of the large amount of money to be won and the reputation of the contestants for speed and sea-going qualities. The match was originally made between James Gordon Bennett on behalf of the *Henrietta* and Franklin Osgood, owner of *Fleetwing*, for \$30,000 a side, the course to be from Sandy Hook to the Needles on the Isle of Wight. Mr. Lorillard, speaking for the *Vesta*, asked to come in and make it a three-cornered match, which was agreed to, swelling the prize to \$90,000.

On the morning of December 11, 1866, the three yachts left their anchorage at Bay Ridge, near Owl's Head, and off Staten Island were taken in tow to the Scotland light, where they took their departure. The commanders were Captains Thomas of the *Fleetwing*, Samuels of the *Henrietta*, and Dayton of the *Vesta*. They got away with a stiff wind to the northwest and all the way over had heavy weather. The *Fleetwing* had a sea board her that took eight men out of the cockpit, six of whom were lost. That was not the end of her misfortunes, as the English pilot she picked up made a mistake in lights in hazy weather and the schooner went miles out of her way.

The *Henrietta*, in command of the old packet captain, won the race, the trip occupying thirteen days and twenty-two hours, almost steamer time, and she was not obliged to make a single tack. The American yachtsmen were so handsomely received by their English confreres that Mr. Bennett



COURTESY OF F. GRAY GRIEWOLD

*The Start of the first Ocean Race, December 11th, 1866.*



offered to present the Henrietta to the Duke of Edinburgh, which offer was gracefully declined.

Yachting is noble sport. The motor craft is fine in its place; it can go where the sailing vessel cannot, but in a contest with the elements the vessel under canvas is the best to my way of thinking. Had I my life to live over again and could take up yachting, I would have a schooner built on the old pilot boat model and clothed as they were—with jib, fore and mainsail, main-top-sail and staysail. Yachtsmen of today may think such a boat would be slow and unsightly, but not so. The sail pilot boat sat gracefully on the water, had as fine stream lines as any ship ever built, and had plenty of speed.

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## XVI.

### THE STAGE PEOPLE

**I**N one of my early letters I referred to the difference in technique between the old and new schools of theatrical art. It seems that the style has ever changed, no other of the professions undergoing a more rapid process of evolution. Betterton, Garrick, the Kembles, and other theatrical stars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are referred to in the histories of the drama as of the old school of acting, just as Shakespeare and his contemporaries were so-called when Barry and Macklin were the highest exponents of the art.

The young of today have no conception of the vast difference between plays and players of the sixties and the stage as the public now knows it. I deem it a great privilege to have lived in the two eras of the drama and must confess that my greatest pleasure in theatre going was in the olden time. Perhaps this state of mind is attributable to my youth when I was more impressionable.

Oratory and declamation characterized the classical plays, and although the language at this time would be regarded as artificial and high-flown, it had a charm for the old theatre goer. To relieve the commonplace, nature was exaggerated, as that was a tenet of the profession. A glamor had to be thrown over everything, speech, action, and even scenery. At that time, the plays of Shakespeare were in favor and all the old-time actors were "up" in that branch of theatricals. Today it would be about impossible to gather a company that could make a Shakespearian play presentable, at least to those not acquainted with the "business" of the plays, their traditions,



and general stage directions. Then no actor or actress was selected because of representing a type, as all were supposed to be versatile.

I do not say that there are no capable actors today, as there are many of them, but at present the speaking stage is rather under a cloud and the "legitimate" is "more honored in the breach than in the observance." However, the pendulum will swing back in its own good time.

The first star of note that I remember was J. K. Hackett, whose Falstaff in the *Merry Wives of Windsor* was the best on the American stage. Dramatic talent was passed on to his son, J. H. Hackett, whom many of my readers will remember. James W. Wallack, Jr., I saw in several plays, but his most memorable character was Matthias in the *Polish Jew*, since called *The Bells*. I saw Irving in the same character, which while very impressive, was not to my mind to be compared with Wallack's rendition of the part. John B. Studley also played Matthias and played it well.

Lester Wallack, an extremely handsome man, excelled in romantic parts, such as Elliott Gray in *Rosedale* and the leading character in *The Veteran*. In genteel comedy he also shone brilliantly. Edwin Forrest I saw in but two of his characters, *King Lear* and *Richelieu*, in his farewell New York engagement. His *Lear* was incomparable, as I saw other stars play the character, and the same I can say of his characterization of the great cardinal. The *Curse of Rome* scene in the third act was the most awesome and deadly ever presented to an audience and had a different effect from that rendered by Edwin Booth in the same character.

Mr. Booth's *Hamlet* was the best in his repertory, and as *Iago* and *Romeo* he had no superiors. The heavier Shake-

spearian parts, such as Macbeth and Othello were fine at his hands but were rendered better by other actors. His Sir Giles Overreach, I have heard those older than myself say, was better done than by his great but erratic father.

Lucille Western, a popular star of the sixties, excelled in emotional parts, such as Lady Audley and Isabel in East Lynn. Her greatest character, however, was as Nancy Sykes in Oliver Twist, with James A. Herne as Bill Sykes. The murder scene as presented by the two was horrifying, so much so that women in the audience fainted and men turned pale. The late Matt Lingham used to tell a characteristic story of Miss Western. It seems that during a New York engagement Mr. Herne was taken ill and Lingham was engaged to play Bill Sykes for the last three nights. At rehearsal, when it came to the murder scene, Lingham was rather timid in handling the Nancy.

"Now, Mr. Lingham," said Miss Western, "you know this is a very realistic scene, and I do not wish you to be backward in playing your part in it. Do not be afraid of hurting me, but use all your strength, as I shall call for every ounce of effort you can put forth."

"That night," said Lingham, "when it came to the murder scene, she whispered, 'do not forget.' I seized her by her long hair and threw her to the floor. She arose and came at me like a tigress. She was very strong and I am no weakling. Again and again I slammed her to the floor, dragging her around by the hair, and finally got her into the room where she was supposed to be killed. She came crawling out all bedaubed with red paint and died before the audience, according to stage directions. I stood in the wings, feeling as guilty as if I had actually committed the crime, old stager as I am. She



*Miss Lucille Western.*



came up to me as the curtain fell. 'Mr. Lingham,' said she, 'I congratulate you on the way you handled that scene; Mr. Herne never did better.'"

Edwin Adams, who died of consumption before he had reached middle age, was a scholarly actor, and had a stage presence that was very attractive. As Mercutio, a brief but engaging part, Mr. Adams shared the honors with Mr. Booth the opening week of Booth's Theatre. Afterward Mr. Adams starred as Enoch Arden in the play of that name, and as Raphael in the *Marble Heart*, both romantic and pathetic characters that always drew crowded houses. Never was a man more beloved by the public and his fellow actors than genial, generous-hearted, and amiable Ned Adams.

Edwin L. Davenport, father of a noted theatrical family, was a Shakespearian actor of uncommon ability. His Brutus was the best on our stage and every part he assumed was well done. He was a first-class all-round actor, equally as good in comedy and domestic drama as in tragedy. One of his most popular characters was that of William, in *Black-Eyed Susan*; his Sailor's horn-pipe in that play was one of its best features.

Joseph Jefferson I first saw play *Rip Van Winkle*, I think at the Olympic Theatre, and the last time some years ago in Chicago. The last performance was as good as the first. I also had the pleasure of seeing him as Newman Noggs and Caleb Plummer, immortalized by Charles Dickens and brought to life by Jefferson. I also saw him as Bob Acres in *The Rivals*, another part he had made his own.

Charlotte Cushman, the star of the American female stars, I first saw as Queen Katherine in *Henry VIII*, a noble, characterization, afterward played by Madame Ristori but



with no greater effect than by our countrywoman. I saw her also as Meg Merrilles and as Nancy Sykes, but she was greater as the Scottish seeress, a part she played up to her final retirement.

Lotta (Charlotte) Crabtree came to New York in the sixties from California, where she had made a great reputation as a player of juvenile characters. Her New York debut was at the Olympic Theatre where she played *The Marchioness*, from Dickens' story, and a round of other characters. She was a pretty little woman with much personal magnetism, and retired from the stage the wealthiest woman in the profession.

John Brougham, Irish gentleman, scholar, and one of the most lovable of men, was at the height of his powers in the sixties. A more versatile man never graced the stage, excepting that he never attempted tragic characters. He was equally at home as Sir Harcourt Hartley, a fine gentleman part, as in a low comedy part in an Irish drama. I have seen him play a polished courtly man of the world to the great pleasure of a refined audience, and again as a lowly bill poster with the fidelity to character of a man raised in the slums.

In rollicking characters he was inimitable, and as a singer, his *Lowback Car* and *Bould Sodger Boy* had a verve and swing that captivated his audiences. As a portrayer of stage Irishmen he had none of those exaggerated mannerisms that in others offended his fellow countrymen. Always the gentleman, his genial wit sparkled, whether playing a man of culture or a peasant.

Mr. Brougham claimed the authorship of *London Assurance*, a genteel comedy, and Dion Boucicault made a similar claim. The concensus of opinion was with Mr. Brougham, as to use a mild term, Boucicault was an adapter, not an origin-







ator. John Brougham was a poor business man, losing much money in theatrical ventures and he was always open-handed to theatrical friends who were in want. The death of his beloved wife left him a lifelong mourner and a painful disease finally brought him to his bed. There in the arms of faithful Maud Granger, whom he loved as a daughter, died one of the finest ornaments of the American stage.

William J. Florence, when I first had the pleasure of seeing him, played Bob Brierly in the Ticket of Leave Man and the same week Captain Cuttle, adapted from Dombey and Son, wearing the costume used by William E. Burton in the same part. I saw him in many parts later in life but none better than his earlier efforts. Florence had an impediment in his speech in ordinary conversation but not at all perceptible when on the stage.

The elder Sothern, tall and slender, well educated and distinguished looking, made his first theatrical hit as Lord Dundreary, adapted from and elaborated upon from the drama of Our American Cousin. This part he played many years, alternating with Brother Sam, another eccentric comedy part. His last character, that in my opinion was his best, was as the Crushed Tragedian, popularly supposed to be a burlesque upon the Count Johannes (an alias of plain George Jones), a would-be tragic actor. Sothern died in the prime of life, leaving as a legacy to the stage his son, E. H. Sothern, a more versatile actor, who with his wife, Julia Marlowe, contributed many bright pages to American theatrical history.

John McCullough I saw play a number of characters, but his masterpiece was Virginius in the classic drama of that name. Supported by Viola Allen as Virginia the two furnished New York with an intellectual treat. McCullough was for

some years a member of Edwin Forrest's company and naturally caught many of the older actors' mannerisms, which, however, did not detract from his style of delivery or action. While on the stage he forgot his lines and made his farewell to the public. The disease was progressive but for some weeks before his death he visited his various friends in New York, a pitiable wreck of what was once a stalwart man. Taken to Philadelphia to the home of his wife he died and was buried in that city.

Of noted stage people from abroad, the first whose performances I witnessed were those of Charles Fechter, who made his American entre as Hamlet, which was a flat failure, a rather gross body and a blonde wig killing the effect. Fechter's forte was the romantic drama. As De Lagadiere in the Duke's Motto and D'Artignan in *The Three Musketeers* he was a gallant figure; a splendid swordsman, a fine elocutionist, and a most graceful lover. His querulous disposition gained him many enemies and he rapidly lost public favor.

Next of the European artists to make a fine impression on New Yorkers was Adelaide Neilson, a beautiful English girl, supported by a superb company. She made her debut as Juliet and a more charming daughter of the Capulets was never seen on an American stage. Her Romeo was Edward Colman, of a noted theatrical family, whose performance was fine but not better than that of several of our home talent. Miss Neilson also played Beatrice and again took the town by storm. She died suddenly in Paris at an early age.

Next, the illustrious Tommaso Salvini! The fame of this Italian tragedian had preceded him and all New York was agog to see the great actor. His first appearance was as Othello and he was a picture. A large, powerfully built man of ma-





*Tommaso Salvini, as "Othello."*



jestic mien, a wonderful voice, with the notes of an organ and every movement and gesture with a depth of meaning. I shall never forget him, as all tragedians I had seen before his time could have gone to school to that man. There was never such an Othello seen before in our country. Salvini spoke in Italian, the others in our tongue, still so eloquent were the foreigner's gestures and inflections of voice that there was no difficulty in understanding him. He was thoroughly absorbed in the character and seemed to infuse his supporters with his earnestness. So realistic was Salvini that Miss Ellie Wilton, who played Desdemona, said that when it came to the death scene in the last act, she was greatly frightened, fearing that Othello would forget himself and really smother her.

I saw him also as Macbeth, Samson, in Civil Death, as the Gladiator, and as Sullivan the actor, a farce known to us as Garrick, played also by Richard Mansfield. In all these parts Salvini was great. In the banquet scene in Macbeth, when the ghost of Banquo arises in Macbeth's place at table, the actors seated there turned pale under their makeup at the expression of horror on the face of the Thane of Cawdor. Following the father came the son, Alexander Salvini, but in a subordinate capacity. Joining one of the stock companies, Alexander acted minor characters in his native language. His intention was first to learn our stage customs and then branch out for himself. In six months, by hard study and practice, he learned the English language so well that he had very little foreign accent. His first role that established him as a melodramatic actor was that of Don Caesar de Bazan, splendidly played. His career had hardly begun when death cut it short before he had reached his thirtieth year.

Of stars of the second magnitude I would rank Frank Mayo

as one of the best. A sterling actor, he based his fame on the titular part of Davy Crockett, a play written for him by the young dramatist, Frank Murdock, whose early death was a great loss to the American stage. As the heroic Davy, Mayo was great, especially in the cabin scene, in which the heroine recites for him the legend of young Lochinvar.

In the same rank of stage stars were Den Thompson and Ned Harrigan. Thompson as Josh Whitcomb in the *Old Homestead*, presented a picture of an old-fashioned New Englander, a fatherly old countryman, whose character was a mixture of shrewdness, pathos and humor that always caught the sympathies of his audiences.

Harrigan was a very versatile actor. In the Mulligan series, depicting New York life among the lowly, he shone conspicuously in every part he undertook, ranking him as one of the best character actors of his time. His Pete, in blackface, in the play of that name, was a fine contrast to his Irish characters, portraying an old-time darkey to the life. Much of Harrigan's popularity was derived from his songs, such as *Solid Men to the Front*, *The Casey Social Club*, and *Saturday Night When the Parlor's Full*, songs that had nationwide reputation. The music of Harrigan's songs was composed by David Braham, the orchestra leader and the comedian's father-in-law, who was a genius in the creation of lilting, sprightly airs that caught the public.

Of the old-time musical comedies and extravaganzas, that of *Evangeline*, by Ed. Rice, was easily the best. It was in this extravaganza that Henry Dixey and Richard Golden made about their first stage essays, serving as the fore and hind legs of the *Dancing Heifer*. And who can forget the *Lone Fisherman*, a pantomimic part played by Harry Hunter and James

Mafitt? The original Evangeline was Selena Delaro, a beautiful dark-eyed daughter of a Spanish father and English mother. A sweet, amiable girl with a lovely soprano voice, graceful and winning. A victim of the White Plague, her life was cut short in a blameless young womanhood, leaving a legion of sorrowing friends. Evangeline is one of the old-time musical plays that would bear reproduction and not lose in popularity.

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## XVII.

### SOME HARBOR NOTES

**I**N the early sixties there were but six European steamship lines: viz., the Cunard, Inman, Anchor, North German, Steam Navigation, and Hamburg-American companies. Since then the lines have vastly increased, with a corresponding advance in the character of the ships. The Cunard Line is the senior of all and some of the others have been merged in companies now known by other names. Two of the ships of the Cunard Line were for years familiar to New Yorkers, both paddle wheel iron steamers, barque rigged and fine specimens of Clyde built vessels. These were the Hibernia and Scotia, afterward transferred to the Mediterranean trade as larger ships took their place for the Atlantic route. The Scotia was long in the command of Captain Judson, commodore of the fleet, and passage in her was booked months ahead, as she was a very popular ship.

Captain Judson was a very able seaman, much liked by the Cunard patrons, but rather pompous in manner. They used to tell a story of him when the Cunard vessels docked at Jersey City. The Scotia was one day warping into her berth when a shabby looking schooner was found to be in the way. Captain Judson, spick and span in his uniform, advanced to the rail and ordered the schooner out of that.

"Who are you?" belligerently inquired the red shirted master of the Down Easter.

"I am Captain Judson, and this is the Royal Mail steamer Scotia," responded the commodore of the fleet in his best quarter-deck voice, "and who are you?"

"This is the schooner Sally Ann of Salem, Massachusetts, Josh Perkins, skipper, an' I'm durned if I git out o' your way until I git good an' ready!" bawled the coaster captain, and he carried his point.

The Russia, put on the Cunard Line several years later, was the finest vessel of her time, but very ordinary compared with the Aquitania, one of the latest of the big Atlantic liners. The Scotia and Hibernia, large and fine as they were in their time, would have answered as excellent launches or tenders for the present big ship.

The Inman Line named their vessels after the cities. One of their noted and unfortunate ships was the City of Boston, lost at sea with no survivors among passengers or crew. Her passing was a mystery, whether by fire or collision with an iceberg, not even a fragment of wreckage having been found.

There was a strange story in connection with this ship that I have never seen in print. A Long Island ironmaster secured passage on the City of Boston and a great number of friends assembled at the pier to see him off. He had said goodbye to his friends and gone on board the ship. A few minutes after, he rushed down the gangplank saying that he was not going. Pressed for his reason, he replied that he had a premonition that had he remained on board he would never have returned. His friends endeavored to laugh off what they deemed a foolish superstition, but he stuck to his resolution and died a natural death years after. I have heard him tell that story, and he always declared that the warning was irresistible. "There are stranger things than are dreamed of in our philosophy."

It was easy to distinguish the steamers of the different lines by the colors of their funnels, but it was not everyone



that had the knack of knowing one from the other. A Long Island school-mate of mine not only made a study of the various liners, Atlantic and coastwise, but also memorized the sailing vessels that belonged to the port. This knowledge was of great use to him after he learned telegraphy. Stationed at the Fire Island Light, Peter Keegan, son of a veteran pilot, has for many years served the maritime interests of the city with accuracy, fidelity, and honor.

Owing to their remote cruising and station grounds, the people of the city had little opportunity to make the acquaintance of the pilot boats and the men who sailed them. Occasionally one of the boats was seen in the harbor, generally going to or from a shipyard where repairs had to be or had been made. But a pilot boat always attracted attention because of her grace and the masterly way in which she was handled. No better seamen existed in the days when sail, only, was the motive power of the pilot boats. The past or master pilot had to be familiar with all rigs, square or fore-and-aft and how the sails should be handled. When he stepped upon the deck of a vessel he was to pilot, he was "monarch of all he surveyed." The ship was in his hands, the Captain had nothing to say, and the responsibility rested with the sturdy man who was to bring the vessel safely to her pier or anchorage. Extremely few vessels have been lost through the fault of a Sandy Hook or New Jersey pilot, and many of those bold and capable seafarers have laid down their lives in shipwreck or collisions, for which they could not be blamed.

There was rivalry between the two bodies of pilots operating in New York waters. The Sandy Hook and New Jersey pilot associations were consolidated some years ago, and the old sailing vessels had to give way to steam crafts. The change







*The departure of the new Steamer "Celtic" from New York.*

deprived the service of much of its romance, but there was no change in the ability of the men who guide vessels in or out of port.

Reverting to rivalry, there was an amusing instance of how one pilot once outmanouvered another. An inbound ship was sighted by a pilot to windward and by another to leeward. Both boats started for the ship, who backed her topsail, deadening her way, while both pilots cracked on for all they were worth. The boat to windward seemingly had the best chance, as she was the nearest. The leeward boat kept on, however, and got within a cable's length of the ship as the other boat was putting off her yawl. The helmsman of the leeward boat luffed her, the pilot standing well up in her fore shrouds, and as the rigging was neatly laid against the ship's spanker boom, her pilot was on her quarter-deck before his rival had reached the ship's side ladder.

During the Civil War the pilots rendered good service to the Government, and had plenty of troubles of their own. Two of the best Sandy Hook boats were captured by the privateer Tallahassee and were never recovered. Every once in a while reports came of heroic rescues by pilots acting as coast guards do now, without hope of reward or expecting it. When the Oregon was sunk by a schooner in collision off Fire Island, her passengers and crew were taken off by a pilot boat and not a soul was lost.

Apart from the city, nevertheless the deeds and misfortunes of the port pilots found a way to the hearts and sympathies of those whose feet were on the shore.

Up to twenty-five years ago, a craft commonly seen threading the waters of the North and East Rivers, was a broad-beamed, blunt-nosed vessel with a single mast bearing a dingy

lug sail and an equally dingy jib attached to a stump bowsprit. They were open boats, steered with a tiller, and were from fifty to seventy-five tons burden. They were lighters, at the beck and call of merchants or ship-owners who wished merchandise transferred from one point to another. Virtually they were cargo taxies of the rivers. In this more rapid era the old sail lighters have been replaced by steam vessels and the old-style craft is but a memory.

During the latter part of the Civil War period, small sharp-built, lead-colored side-wheel steamers with raking funnels and low freeboard, were frequently seen entering the upper bay. They were blockade runners, captured coming out of Wilmington and other Southern ports, and sent north with prize crews. At one time the Erie Basin on the Brooklyn side seemed to be full of them. It was the custom with these blockade runners to load with cotton for the British mills and return with munitions of war, medicines and other necessities for the Confederacy. Some went direct to English ports, others to Nassau, New Providence, where they transshipped their cargoes. Although a very risky mode of trade, there was much money to be made at it, as with the rum runners that flourish today, and the owners had no difficulty in finding commanders and crews for the boats, as each man had a "lay" in the profits.

Almost daily during the war period, stout, open, jib and mainsail boats, loaded high with filled baskets and bags, tied up in the Fulton Street slips on both rivers. They were market boats, owned by market gardeners of Long Island, but their time of life expired when the roadways of the island were improved for wheeled vehicles.

Then, as now, trim yachtlike schooners sailed up the East

River to Fulton Market and discharged their cargoes of fish, and many of the discarded pilot boats were used by the deep sea fishermen.

Other small jib and mainsail boats, decked over and almost awash, made their way to anchored vessels in the river and upper harbor. They were water boats, supplying city water for the tanks of outbound ships.

Occasionally a Nantucket whaler, stump masted, with rows of wooden davits on her sides, made her way into port and was an interesting object.

I suppose sunrise and sunset guns are still fired from Governor's Island. When a boy I often stood at sunset on the Battery and watched the evening ceremony. The gun, an old style Parrot muzzle-loader, stood on the north sea wall, close to Castle Williams. A few minutes before the appointed time an old ordnance sergeant emerged from the Castle, carrying a bag holding fifteen pounds of powder. He carried it to the gun, set the bag in the muzzle and rammed it home. Then with measured step he went to the breech, inserted the primer and attached the lanyard. With the lanyard held taut in his right hand, with his left hand he drew out his watch, and at the exact minute gave a pull and the sun had set according to the time fixed by the Naval Observatory at Washington.



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## XVIII.

### THE SCRIBBLERS

NEW YORK, like every other city, has its clubs, and the dean of such institutions is the Union Club, founded prior to 1840, making its length of life to date nearly one hundred years. Its original membership embraced old New York family representatives, such as the Brevoorts, Hammerslys, van Cortlands, Stuyvesants, Livingstons, and Schuylers. It was meant to be exclusive and is so. Fathers nominated their sons while babes in arms for membership, a provision which was withdrawn in later years; nevertheless, entree to this club is based on the best social standing, not necessarily wealth but worth in breeding and intellectuality.

The Union League Club was organized during the War of the States, as a political and patriotic body, its functions ceasing after the period of Reconstruction and resumption of specie payments.

The first organization including in its membership newspaper men, authors, artists, and actors was the Lotus Club organized 1870. Previously a favorite resort of these fraternities was Pfaff's beer cellar on Broadway near Canal Street, where Henry Clapp, Ada Clare, and Bayard Taylor were among the chief patrons. The Lotus Club brought together the same elements, to be governed by rules, and it formed a strong organization.

The Scribblers' Club was an offshoot of the Lotus Club, organized in 1872 and had their quarters on Thirteenth Street near Fifth Avenue. Joe Howard, Jr., at one time owner and editor of the New York Star, was the president. Howard after-







*Paul du Chaillu lecturing on his discovery, the Gorilla.*

ward became a free lance and for some years furnished a daily syndicated column to the press. Joe often exhibited a handsome gold hunting case watch, that he laughingly claimed had more than once been the means of enabling the Star to go to press through a temporary loan by his "Uncle" Simpson up the street. Among members of the Scribblers' Club were Bayard Taylor, poet, author, and traveler; Harry Leslie; Sam McKeever, Richard K. Fox, John E. Evans, Andrew H. Wheeler ("Nym Crinkle"), Henry M. Stanley, and A. Oakey Hall, newsmen; Sidney Rosenfeld, James Connelly, and Scott Marble, dramatists; Augustus Pitou, Sr., McKee Rankin, John Brougham, John Templeton, and Charles R. Thorne, actors; James Munson, the noted stenographer; Thomas V. Cator, afterward a power in politics; Dan Bryant, Nelse Seymour, and Bob Hart, negro minstrels; and last but not least, Paul du Chaillu, traveler and author.

Stanley was rather unsociable and not given to conversation. He generally sat by himself, smoking and consuming bottles of beer. All knew him as a gifted newspaper correspondent, and were not surprised when James Gordon Bennett commissioned him to proceed to Africa and find Dr. Livingston.

Bayard Taylor was always entertaining with his talks of travel and adventure, and A. Oakey Hall, an amiable character, invariably showed himself to be a well-read man of the world. None of us who knew of his Tammany Ring connection but believed him to have been an unconscious tool of a pack of rascals, nor did we believe that he had profited by the affiliation.

Paul du Chaillu, the little old Frenchman, was the pet of the club. Seated before the glowing wood fire he entertained

the younger members with stories of his adventures in Africa. One thing that was a source of regret and chagrin to him was the refusal of natural historians to credit him with the truth as regarded gorillas in the African wilds of the Congo. "Zey do not believe me," he was wont to say, plaintively, "but some day some travelling in ze Afrique contray will find zat I have told ze truth."

His augury came to pass in after years, proving that Du Chaillu's story of the great simians was not a mere "traveler's tale."

It was the custom of the Scribblers' Club to have a monthly dinner to which celebrities of the city and from abroad were invited. Mark Twain, Bret Harte, D. R. Locke ("Petroleum V. Nasby"), Henry G. Shaw ("Josh Billings"), and Stephen Massett ("Jeems Pipes of Pipesville"), were among those who attended and kept the table in a roar. The venerable William Cullen Bryant was a frequent and honored visitor. At one dinner, after President Howard had toasted Bryant, The Sweet Minstrel, in a neat speech, it was comical to see Bryant, the poet, and Bryant, the negro minstrel, rise in response to the compliment. I shall never forget the expression on Dan's face as he sat down again.

Well, the Scribblers' Club had a brief but merry life. Expenses exceeded the revenues and the inevitable happened. The Club's successors was the Lambs, founded on a more substantial basis, governed by past experiences. I mention these last three organizations as examples of what may be called Bohemian club life in the latter part of the last century.

I believe all the men whose names are quoted in the foregoing have departed this life. They were a happy-go-lucky

lot, taking life as it came, pursuing vicarious professions and looking upon the slings and arrows of fortune with equanimity. With the passage of time there has been no alteration in these characteristics, the greatest of which is charity.

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## XIX.

### CHASING UP A CANDIDATE

I TRUST that you will again pardon me for indulging in a personal reminiscence, my only excuse being that it pertains to a phrase of the Presidential campaign of 1872. There was a split in the Republican ranks that year, leading to the formation of the Liberal Republican Party, who at the May Convention at Cincinnati, nominated Horace Greeley as their Presidential candidate.

I was at that time engaged in a publishing venture which failed to place my partner and self among the leaders in that line of business. You see, I believe in candor in all things. Among a number of friends that were my seniors, by many years, was William H. Brown, author of a history of pioneer railroads of the United States, and a marvelous silhouette artist. Doubtless you remember seeing a picture in black of an early railroad train, the cars resembling Concord coaches mounted on trucks, the locomotive with its straight cylindrical smoke stack and open platform tender. That was the work of Mr. Brown, who was a passenger on that train. Mr. Brown also published a national portrait gallery, which embraced silhouettes of the Presidents and noted statesmen of the first half of the last century. The fidelity of the likenesses was remarkable, and easily placed Mr. Brown in the front rank of artists. His likenesses were made from observation, not from shadows thrown on a wall or sheet and reduced. His method was to take a black piece of stiff paper, and with a small pair of scissors cut out the profile without drawing the lines.

Shortly after Mr. Greeley's nomination, Mr. Brown came



to my office and suggested making a silhouette of the Sage of the Tribune, to be reproduced and sold as a campaign souvenir. I liked the idea and told him to go ahead.

The next morning we started for the Tribune office, Mr. Brown armed with a ponderous copy of his National Portrait Gallery as a bait. At the Tribune office we were told that Mr. Greeley was at the Union League Club. Arriving at the club we were informed that Mr. Greeley had just left for Chappaqua. It began to look as if we were on a wild goose chase, but boarding a train we proceeded to Chappaqua where we found the Tribune editor seated at a desk in his library. Mr. Brown laid the portrait gallery before him, which Mr. Greeley went through, expressing gratification with the faithful likenesses of those men he had personally known. For once the old gentleman was in good humor.

"Well, gentlemen, what do you want of me?" he asked in his squeaky voice, when he had finished the gallery.

"Just to make a silhouette of you," replied Mr. Brown.

"All right, how long will it take? I'm very busy now."

"Just a minute, Mr. Greeley, please stand up."

Although a Republican, Horace Greeley was very democratic in manner and attire, so hat on head, a sheet of paper in his left hand, a pen in his right, he stood up. Mr. Brown at his side, surveyed him from head to foot once or twice.

"That's all, Mr. Greeley, I am obliged to you. Good day." On the way cityward I asked the artist when he intended to make the picture.

"Oh, I'll do it before I go to bed," he replied.

"But can you retain that figure in your mind for that length of time?" I queried. "It is now one o'clock."

"Yes," was the confident answer. "I could make it a week

from now and get it right. You'll see tomorrow morning. Now, as you have invited me to lunch, what do you say to a New England boiled dinner? You know I'm from Boston and I know where we can get the real thing."

Well, we had the "real thing" and enjoyed it.

"Now," said Mr. Brown, "if you can spare the time, I would like to introduce you to one of the finest ladies you ever met. She is old enough to be your mother, so don't shy away."

I was agreeable, so we headed for the Everett House. Mr. Brown sent up his card and we were invited to ascend. As the door was opened by a neat maid, a tall, and rather stout, grey-haired lady was looking out the window. She turned and throwing her arms around Mr. Brown's neck, she gave him a hearty kiss, exclaiming:

"Bill Brown! I am so glad you came to see me!"

"And I am glad to see you, Lottie," replied the artist.

Then I was formally presented to Miss Charlotte Cushman.

It seems that Miss Cushman and Mr. Brown were playmates in childhood and life-long friends. The two sat together and talked over old times while the young man hung upon the words of the great actress.

Mr. Brown remarked upon Miss Cushman's intended retirement.

"Yes," she said, "I am really going to retire *this* time, as I feel I must, and then, Bill, what shall I do; what *can* I do? I don't want to rust out, having been so energetic all my life. The public are getting tired of me and I am an old woman. I have sufficient to live on in comfort but I feel that I shall not live much longer."

When this gifted woman died, it was discovered that for some years she had suffered from an incurable complaint, but her indomitable will kept her on her feet.

To resume the Greeley part of the story. The next morning Mr. Brown appeared with two silhouettes, one of full length, the other a bust, and both perfect likenesses. The old gentleman had a room in a printing loft on Beekman Street, where he "bached" it. Before retiring he removed the glass from the oil lantern he used, smoked a piece of paper by the lamp, and scraped the mercury from a piece of broken mirror. The mercury he mixed with water and used to represent the long hair and whiskers after cutting out the figure. It was Mr. Greeley to the life, as clean-cut as if taken by a camera. I chose the full length silhouette and had an electrotpe made from it, selling over 40,000 copies. The bust likeness Mr. Brown kept to add to his gallery. What became of his copy I do not know, but any copy of this unique work would be worth a lot of money to a collector.

Mr. Greeley died the latter part of November, defeated in the election by over a million of the popular vote by General Grant.

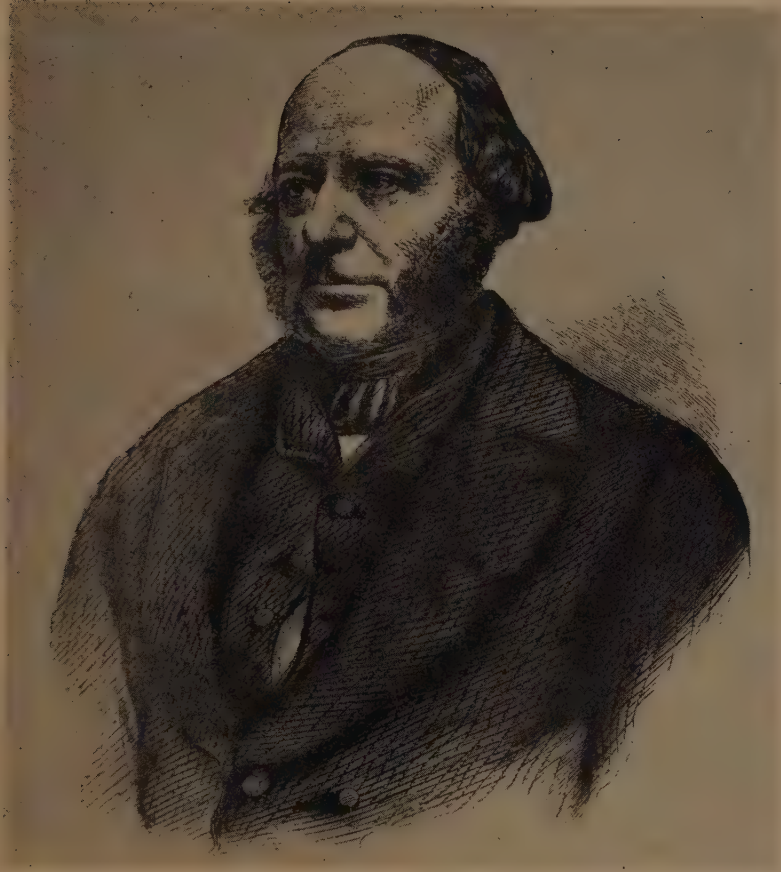
The electrotpe of the Greeley silhouette I presented to Miss Gabrielle Greeley, oldest daughter of the famous editor.

## IN TRIBUTE TO A GENIUS

A FEW months ago they unveiled a memorial at Washington, to Captain John Ericsson, the Swedish inventor and adopted American. The sculptor succeeded in creating an almost perfect portrait statue of the famous man as he looked in the later years of his life. The figure is seated at the base of the structure, with the face directed to the northward, and above are several symbolical figures. Around the sides of the quadrangle are inscriptions indicating the principle achievements of the inventor. As a work of plastic art it is one of the finest in the Capital of the nation.

Many old New Yorkers, particularly those who resided in the Fifth Ward, must remember to have seen in the warm months of the sixties and seventies, a square-built man of medium height, gray haired and wearing a beard that encompassed the lower part of his face and throat, seated on the front steps of an old-style brick residence, one of a long row on Varick Street, near the junction of North Moore Street. It was Captain John Ericsson, who had long been a resident of the city.

As I was living in the seventies in Greenwich Village and walked to and from my place of business, I passed the Ericsson residence twice a day. The lonely, blue-garbed figure on the front steps attracted me strongly. He appeared to have no intimates, nor did his manner seem to invite intimacy. His expression was calm, phlegmatic rather, but the impression conveyed to the passer-by was that he was a man of force and character.



*Captain John Ericsson.*





Having access to a large newspaper exchange list, I clipped all items relating to mechanical inventions and discoveries, and when a number of them had accumulated, placed them in an envelope and handed them to the Captain with an explanatory remark. After doing this for several weeks, one afternoon the Captain asked me if I was interested in mechanics. I replied that I was in a general way and kept myself informed as to what was developed in the line of invention. He then invited me to see his workshop and form an idea as to how he passed his time. "Not that there is any profit in it," he said smilingly, "but it keeps me from getting rusty."

He led the way to the upper story of his residence. There with partitions removed, throwing the story into one large room, he had a machine shop in miniature. At the rear end of the room was a small vertical boiler with engine, shafting overhead, and at one side lathes for machining and wood working, and a full set of carpenter tools.

On high benches and against the walls were ranged models of the Captain's various inventions, including a scale replica of the original Monitor, which had revolutionized warship building.

Previous to coming to the United States in 1839, Captain Ericsson had invented an improved locomotive in England with forced draught, doing away with the large smoke stack. He also invented a steam fire engine. Drawings of these inventions were displayed on the walls of the shop. His first work on arriving in this country was the perfection of the screw propeller, which in time superseded in a large measure the paddle wheels used on steam vessels. Many inventors, including John Stevens of Hoboken, had worked on the propeller idea, with indifferent success. Ericsson, a skilled engineer

and mechanician, perfected it. The Princeton, then the crack ship of the old U. S. wooden navy, was the first warship provided with the Ericsson propeller. The Captain also introduced another vital improvement on the Princeton, which was the placing of the boilers and engine below the waterline, out of the way of shot. Among others of his inventions were a deep-sea lead, a pyrometer for measuring temperatures, an alarm barometer and a water meter.

"Here is what I have been working on," said the Captain, directing my attention to a contrivance that was on the floor in a corner. It resembled an open umbrella, but instead of cloth or silk the divisions were occupied by long triangular mirrors which centered on a metal closed tube an inch or so in diameter and about nine inches long.

"This is what I call the solar engine," explained the Captain. "Turned up, as you see it, and exposed to the rays of the sun, the light is concentrated on the metal tube containing water. The concentrated rays generate heat, acting like a burning glass, and the water is converted into steam, which conveyed through the pipe you see attached moves this little engine. It may be only a toy, power depending upon the size of the generator, but the fact that it requires no fuel but sunlight, free to all, is its great advantage."

I do not know whether the Captain patented the invention or not, but I understand that the solar engine on a large scale has been used in California. It was a high privilege to meet that plain, unassuming great man. He seemingly was not wealthy, living the simple life; ranking with the great inventors yet shunning the limelight; loaded with honors which he bore modestly and with quiet dignity.

Twelve years after he had admitted me to his sanctum,

to which he admitted very few, Captain John Ericsson passed away. A grateful republic paid him the last honors by conveying his body on a United States warship to his native land. Amid the solemn thunder of minute guns, the remains of one of the best of our adopted citizens was delivered at Stockholm to his sorrowing countrymen.

The name of John Ericsson will remain a monument in American history, as his best work was given to this country, but his influence as an inventor is world-wide. Scandinavia never sent us a better son.

## SOCIAL LIFE

**A**FTER the rather lengthy grist of theatrical matters, I will touch on the social life of the sixties and seventies, and you cannot help note that manners and customs have changed with the times. The electric lights, telephones, elevators, automobiles, and street cars operated by electricity were undreamed of over sixty years ago, nor were such exotics known as cafes, tea rooms, and night clubs. If one were in a hurry to get up or down town a hack or horse-drawn street car was the medium. If a message or parcel was to be sent, it was per the Soldiers' Messenger Corps, the forerunner of the district messenger system.

The "flapper" of today is the very opposite of the modish young woman of the sixties and seventies. Then the hair was long, made up in a "waterfall," or confined in a net, the coiffure resembling a beaver's tail, the whole covered by a bonnet much like that worn by the present-day Salvation lassie, and later by a round affair shaped like a pudding dish. Long skirts distended by a hooped cage four to five feet in diameter concealed the feet. No knee-length skirt was seen unless on a ballet dancer, and silk stockings were never worn unless on the stage or in a ballroom. However, there were compensations. When a lady endeavored to crowd a five-foot hoop skirt through a thirty-inch omnibus door, the revelation may be imagined.

Paint and powder were confined to the demi-monde and the ladies of the theatrical profession whose natural color would look ghastly under the glare of the footlights. The lead-







*Easter Morning on Fifth Avenue in 1870.*



ing authority on female attire was Godey's Ladies Book, which was religiously followed. Gradually the hoopskirt diminished in size, terminating in a bustle, and that too went its way in time. The girl of today would characterize the girl of sixty years ago a perfect fright, but we knew no better then.

The process of evolution in men's clothing has been slower. A beau of the sixties could have passed muster on our promenades of today and the differences set down as a matter of individual taste. The overgaiters, now known as "spats," were always dark in color, and, in the language of the street, were called "waddling pens," expressive, if not elegant. High hats were commonly worn until the introduction of the English derby which relegated the "plug" to politicians and Patrick's Day parades.

Although Lucy Stone was an earnest advocate of female suffrage her followers represented but a minute fraction of the gentler sex. As for women voting, perish the thought! The "bunny hug," "shimmy," and "grizzly bear" dances of those days may have been seen in the sailor dives of Water and Cherry Streets. The square dances were confined to the Lancers, quadrilles, Cheat and Jig, and Virginia Reel; the round dances to the polka, schottische, mazurka, and old-style waltz. Later the pivot waltz, the most graceful of round dances, was introduced from Vienna, to the music of Johann Strauss, whose Blue Danube is a classic. There were dancing schools then as now, with the Dodsworths as leaders among the "select," and social parties in the homes of all classes always had dancing as part of the entertainment. Brooks' Academy at Grand and Elizabeth Streets catered to the east side element, teaching all styles of dancing. Old New Yorkers must

remember the refrain: "I spent three weeks at Brooks' Academy, learnin' a step for Lannigan's Ball."

Jazz, contrary to general opinion, was a musical excrecence in the sixties but not known by that name. It was a negro feature introduced in the north by "contrabands" who flocked to cities above the Mason and Dixon Line after the passage of the Sixteenth Amendment. It originally came from Africa, and, between you and me, it would be well to relegate it to its birthplace.

The song writers of the sixties and seventies were not as numerous as today, but they composed songs that still live and will continue to live long after the best of present day lyrics are forgotten.

Young men of moderate means owned a fast stepping driving horse and a Brewster or Berry buggy. With these rigs they treated their best girls to rides, and with a well-acting reliable horse, every young fellow who knew what was what was able to drive with one hand. Usually the drives were to High Bridge or over on Long Island, or by Fort Lee ferry to Jersey.

Sometimes parties were made up for a trip to John I. Snediker's, near the old Union Course on Long Island, or even to Pete van Riper's at Hackensack, N. J. A fine supper followed by a dance and then home in the early hours of the morning.

One favorite fall entertainment was the husking bee. When corn was ready to shuck, the farmer giving the party, with city folk among the invited, would clean the floor of his big barn and sprinkle it with damp sea sand, dump eighty or more bushels of corn at the far end and gather all his lamps and lanterns for lighting. The first thing was to start the boys





*The Well Dressed New Yorker in 1868.*

and girls to husking the corn. When a young chap uncovered a red ear he was entitled to kiss his girl, and the host saw to it that there were plenty of red ears scattered through the heap. It is a singular fact that a girl rarely found a red ear; if she did she shoved it back again. That was part of the fun. When the husking was over, which did not take very long, the refreshments were brought in, consisting of a large keg of cider, baskets of doughnuts and some mince pies. Then a couple of darkey fiddlers struck up with Money Musk, Turkey in the Straw, or some other lively tune and the dance was on.

Ah, boy! many a husking bee I took in and stuck my eyelids up with sealing wafers to keep awake the next day.

The family gathering in the country home on a keen winter's night was something to be remembered. Given an old style fire place, with well cured hickory logs to warm and cheer, with Maggie at the piano and all hands coming in on the chorus, what is to compare with that in these days of artificiality, when we have to forsake home to find entertainment? Josh Billings in his quaint way expressed the old-time family gathering with happy contentment when he penned:

*"Now gather 'round the kitchen fire,  
An' pile the chunks on higher an' higher,  
Git out the ole fiddle an' partners choose  
An' shake it down in your cowhide shoes."*

New Year's Day was observed as a strictly social event. Almost every family kept open house, especially when there were young ladies in the household, and each belle tried to outdo the others in the number of her callers. A table was set with cakes, pastry, candies, and wines and liquors of every



description. Each caller was expected to partake, and by nightfall it was an exceptionally hard-headed young fellow who was steady on his legs and coherent in his speech. A favorite test was to pronounce "discriminate" or some other four-syllabled word, and if he couldn't it was time to put him to bed.

This custom died a natural death and I rather think it was a good thing.

The "swell" public affairs were the balls under the auspices of various organizations, the Charity Ball being the leader. All New York's exclusives attended this annual ball, and, as a rule, the charity offerings did not foot up much after expenses were paid. The annual Tweed and Calico balls were patronized by politicians and their womenfolk, terminating in an orgy in the morning hours when John Barleycorn ruled the roost.

In the heated term fashionable New York sought the watering places like Saratoga and Newport, while the working and small business classes hied themselves to Fort Lee, Rockaway, or Coney Island on Sundays. Coney Island at that time was a lone strip of sand, the only resorts being Norton's at the west end and Vanderveer's at the terminus of the horse-car line. Hot dogs and lager beer were unknown, but clam chowder and clam bake were to be had by those who failed to bring luncheons.

In town the ice cream gardens did a flourishing business. The best of these was Thompson's, previously referred to.

Excursions to picnic grounds were favorite diversions of Sunday schools and organizations the reverse of Sunday schools, necessitating the company of a police boat. The Gentlemen's Sons of the Sixth Ward never went on a jaunt of this



nature without making the return trip an occasion of riot and bloodshed.

One custom has been kept up and that is regular visits to the Fishing Banks, in which those who did not succumb to seasickness generally returned with a mess of fish. Al Foster was for many years the presiding genius of these excursions and never failed to place his boat where his patrons could get what they went after. If a general fight broke out on board, all Al had to do was to put the boat where she could roll good and all hands had something else to attend to.

Now, sonny boy, I have given you quite a budget of recollections of old New York, and by this time you have been able to realize the vast difference between the period of which I wrote and the present. My boyhood was passed in a cruder age, as it were, still it was a happy one to me, and when you reach my years, which I hope you will, you, too, will live your young life over as the aged always do, and contrast the old with the new.

As some of the folks down my way say:

*Vaya usted con Dios.*

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XXII.

DO YOU REMEMBER ?

The old Stuyvesant pear tree at Thirteenth Street and Third Avenue?

\* \* \*

The old muzzle-loading cannons, planted on street corners as curb protectors?

\* \* \*

The North Dutch Church on William Street between Fulton and Ann Streets?

\* \* \*

The old Walton House on Franklin Square?

\* \* \*

The flag pole on Hudson Street back of St. John's Church?

\* \* \*

The old Ridley candy factory at Chambers and Hudson Streets?

\* \* \*

St. John's Park before it was a railroad yard?

\* \* \*

Shantytown where Morningside Park now is?

\* \* \*

The reservoir that was in Bryant Square?

\* \* \*

When you picked blackberries in Central Park?

\* \* \*

When there was a circus at Fourteenth Street and Irving Place?



*Looking South on Fifth Avenue from 42nd Street. The Library now stands on the site of the Reservoir.*



When the school teacher used to lay it on good and hard?

\* \* \*

When you wore your first pair of boots with the American eagle in gilt at the tops?

\* \* \*

When your first pair of skates screwed on and the blades curled up in front?

\* \* \*

The Depau Row on Bleecker Street?

\* \* \*

When the Tiffany jewelry house was on Broadway near Prince Street?

\* \* \*

The Goelet house at Broadway and Nineteenth Street with peacocks and pheasants in the front yard?

\* \* \*

The old Hall of Records that stood in City Hall Park?

\* \* \*

St. Thomas' Church at Broadway and Houston Streets?

\* \* \*

Van Amburg's menagerie in the Chinese Museum?

\* \* \*

Stockwell, the O.I.C. man on Ann Street?

\* \* \*

The ferry boats before the gates were placed on them?

\* \* \*

Pot Rock in Hellgate, where Sandy Gibson held the fort?

\* \* \*

The hogsheads of molasses at Burling and Old Slip?

How you used to sample their contents?

\* \* \*

When Arnold & Constable's store was at Mercer and Canal Streets?

\* \* \*

Apple Mary and her basket?

\* \* \*

Moses and his sandwiches?

\* \* \*

When Billy Sharkey escaped from the Tombs?

\* \* \*

When Bill Tweed asked: "What are you going to do about it?"

\* \* \*

Sheriff Jimmy O'Brien and his auburn locks?

\* \* \*

When ward organizations held target excursions?

\* \* \*

When Long Island market gardeners gathered at Washington Market?

\* \* \*

When Broadway was a foot deep in mud?

\* \* \*

When Kip and Brown ran stage sleighs?

\* \* \*

When Fortieth Street was in the suburbs?

\* \* \*

When Bill Broadway had a meat stand in Jefferson Market?



When it was a standing joke to send a man all over town  
looking for Tom Collins?

\* \* \*

The last parade of the Volunteer Fire Department?

\* \* \*

The old wooden fire plugs?

\* \* \*

When the completion of the Pacific Railways was cele-  
brated by booming cannon in New York?



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